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Friday
16 June 2000
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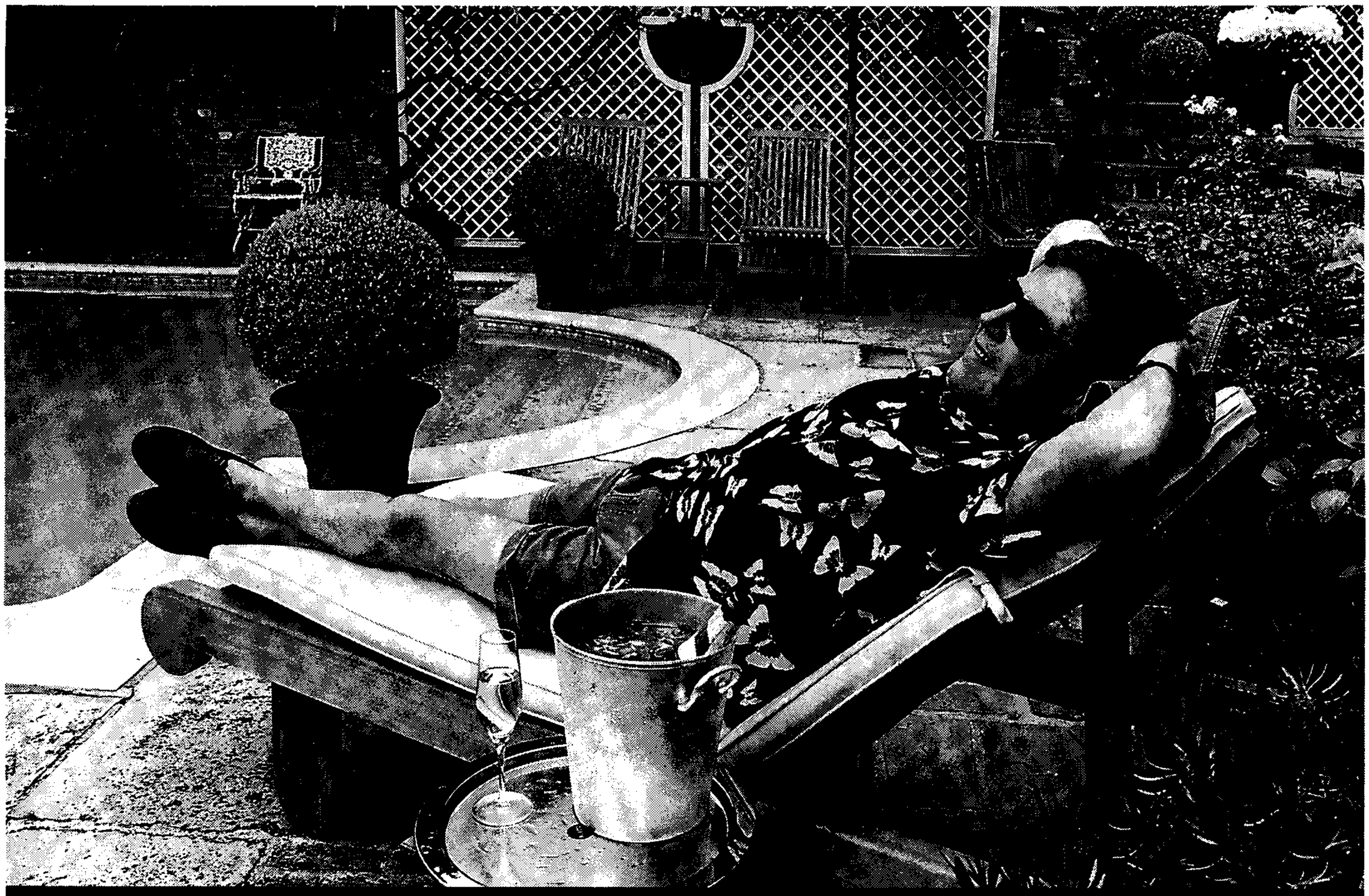
HISTORIC MEETING SOUVENIR



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INFOGRAMES

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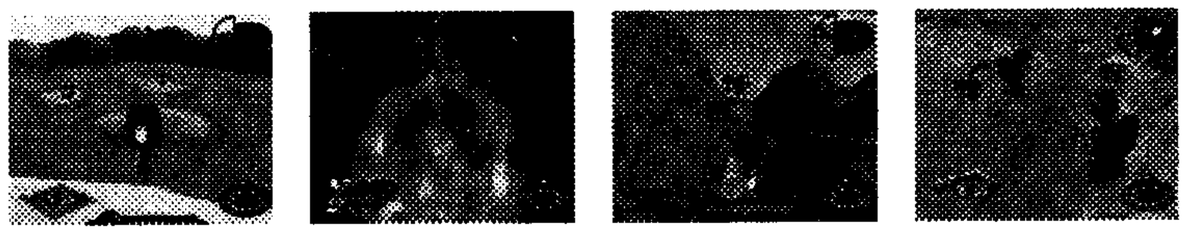

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▒ H U N T S W O O D

A STATEMENT

PRIVATE EYE has decided, after considerable soul-searching, not to print this photograph of Prince Charles Moore on the eve of his 46th birthday.

This young shy Etonian, who has captured the hearts of millions of British citizens with his winsome smile and charming manners, deserves to be left alone to make money out of pictures of the Royal Family, without having gutter journalists exposing every detail of his commercial activities as though this was in the public interest.

We are going to leave Charles alone until he is a fully grown adult like his father, the 97-year-old William Deedes.

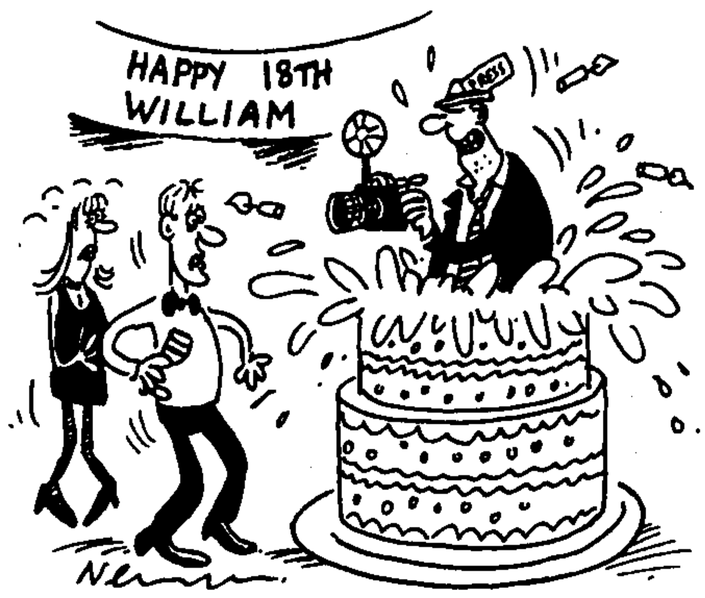
ON OTHER PAGES

Tally Ho! Charles takes a tumble at the hunt **3**

What a Charlie! Charles dances the night away at the Telegraph Christmas Party **4**

Is Sarah Sands the one for Charles? Drooling speculation to fill up paper **5**

Unfunny Charles Cartoon by Garland **94**



"Surprise!"

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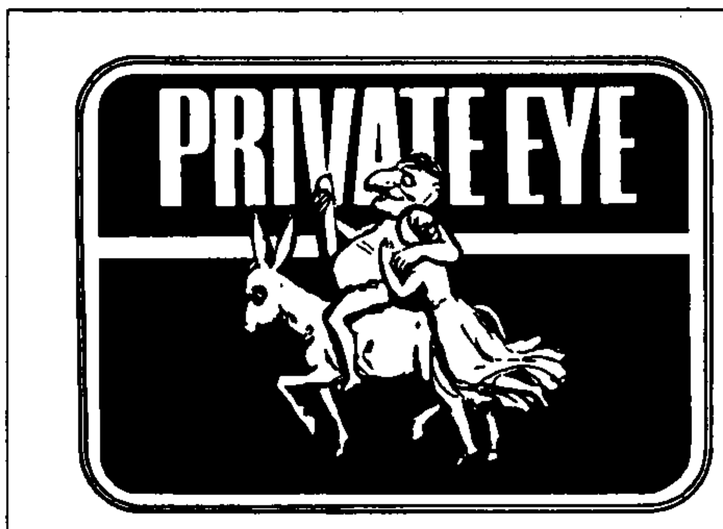
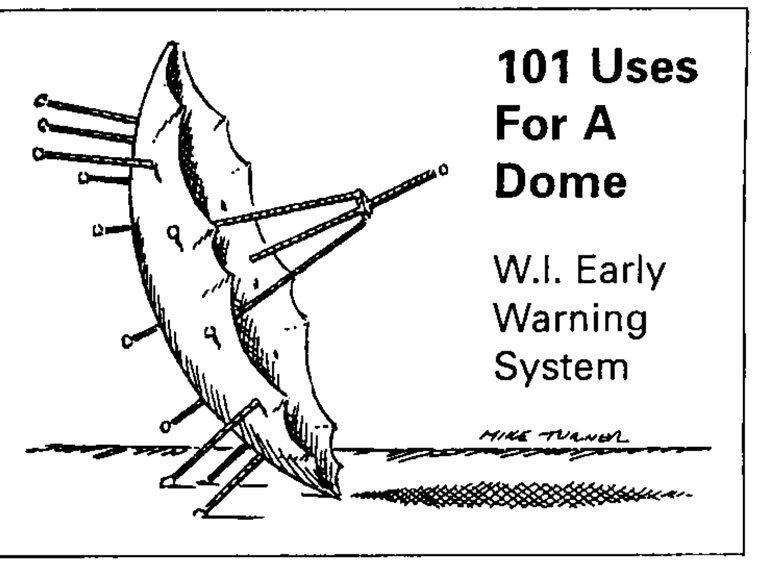




THE Queen was narked, to say the least, when her meeting with Camilla at Charles's barbie was splashed all over the Sunday papers.

Brenda had agonised about meeting "the Rottweiler" for some time, pulled in one direction by the gentle persistence of her son and in the other by the implacable opposition of her husband ("Bloody woman!").

Brenda had summoned the Archbishop of Canterbury to the palace for advice on whether it was OK to hob-nob with Brian's longterm squeeze as the BBQ ribs and jumbo sausages sizzled outside. Carey in turn trotted off to talk things over with Richard Chartres, Bishop of London and confidant of Prince Charles. Carey's reassurance, coupled with William and Harry's acceptance of Camilla, finally persuaded the reluctant monarch to acknowledge the existence of her son's lover.

But Brenda was peeved to find that news of the meeting had been leaked to hacks – either by her own staff or someone in Charles's office. The press assumption that Camilla will now be invited to the grand family bash at Windsor on 21 June to celebrate the Queen Mum's 100th has also upset delicate negotiations within the royal family. No firm decision has yet been made about the invite because the Queen Mum, like Prince Philip, is no Camilla fan.

Universites: how state pupils lose out

Independent on Sunday

WHITEHALL, desperate to do something to salvage the millennium dome, has tried unsuccessfully to get a couple of high-profile birthday parties staged there.

First came a memo from senior cabinet office civil servants suggesting that a major bash to celebrate the Queen Mum's centenary could be held in the Greenwich folly. This was promptly knocked on the head by Clarence House: not because of the venue, but out of distaste at the prospect of Ma'am Senior's hooley being hijacked by the grinning Blair. The Queen Mum is, after all, a long-time member of the WI.

Then, during a brain-storming session in Downing Street, came the suggestion that Prince William might like to hold his 18th birthday party there. The idea was tentatively passed on from Blair's office but got no further than the Prince of Wales's wastepaper basket.

A JOLLY reunion is planned for 4 July between top accountants Arthur Andersen and Patricia Hewitt, former head of research at sister firm Andersen Consulting and now the government's minister for e-business.

Hewitt is absolutely the right keynote speaker at a conference hosted by Andersens and entitled, inevitably, UK.Com. Among the subjects unlikely to be raised, however, is the amount of money taxpayers shelled out to Andersens after the latter made such a mess of the government's insurance computer, NIRS2.

Weeks ago the *Eye* tried to get an answer from the treasury and the Inland Revenue to this important question, but neither could help. However, the April issue of *Public Finance* magazine had a shot at guessing the sum. It calculated the total cost of the NIRS2 fiasco to the government as roughly £53m. Andersens was good enough to fork out £4m, so the amount they still owe taxpayers, so generously waived by new Labour ministers, is in the region of £48m.

JUST FANCY THAT!

"I'm sick of these public school Oxford types getting the top jobs."

— Gordon Brown to Tony Blair, front cover of *Private Eye*, 2 June

"Hasn't it occurred to him that when the chancellor whinges about public school boys getting the top jobs, he's not just talking about Oxford University?"

— William Hague to Tony Blair, prime minister's questions, 7 June

"Actually, when I heard Gordon Brown I wondered whether there might not just be a tiny hint of rivalry involved. Who do you think he had in mind when he started moaning about Oxford-educated public schoolboys taking the top jobs?"

— William "Stop Me If You've Heard It Before" Hague's speech to Welsh Tory party conference, 8 June

MANY people wonder why the definitive statement attacking elitist education at Oxbridge was left to Gordon Brown who is, after all, chancellor of the exchequer. Here's the answer.

As soon as news came in about the North Tyneside girl who didn't get into Oxford on the basis of wonderful A level grades she had not yet achieved, spin doctors unanimously agreed on the suitability of the material for a ministerial broadside against elitism.

Pressure was brought on David Blunkett, education secretary and the obvious man for the job, to make the appropriate noises. But for some reason the cautious Blunkett couldn't bring himself to take the plunge. As he dithered, Prudence Brown lost patience and decided to put the boot in (and take the credit) himself.

AT A Downing Street reception last month, shortly before the birth of Leo Blair, the lovely Cherie was overheard murmuring to Sir Richard Branson: "We're going to have to do something for you."

Various possibilities come to mind: allow Beardie to run the national lottery; prevent British Midland flying from Heathrow, thus protecting Virgin Atlantic from price-cutting competition; or, perhaps, give him a peerage.

● *Camilla Parker Bollocks 7*

● *Ad Nauseam on the great dot.con 13*

HISTORIC MEETING PT II*

*(*Director's cut)*

NEWS

SERIOUS allegations of sleaze relating to John Prescott's proposed sale of Britain's air traffic control system (NATS) have been made before the controversial sell off has even begun.

The scandal is in New Zealand where the US arms giant Lockheed Martin, widely tipped as frontrunner in the British privatisation, has teamed up with New Zealand's publicly-owned air traffic control organisation, the Airways Corporation, to bid for Britain's NATS.

The idea was for Lockheed to acquire a bit of "public sector gloss" via its new partner. But New Zealand's auditor-general has just launched a formal investigation into Airways Corp's cooperation with Lockheed following allegations of insider trading, illegality and misuse of public funds. New Zealand's state enterprises minister Mark Burton has ordered Airways to stop work on the bid until the report is complete.

The central allegation is that three public sector managers from Airways stood personally to gain NZ$10m if they won the British privatisation. The three – chief executive Craig Sinclair, John Bole and Paul Woodbury – have all relocated to England to work on the NATS deal. According to the allegations, not only did they fail to tell the government about the clause in the contract with Lockheed and merchant bank Apax which offered them the success fee, but they tried to hush up the bonus.

Airways company secretary and legal counsel Ezequiel Trumper is said to have complained about their personal enrichment and failure to disclose it to the board or tell the government. This led to Trumper's resignation, allegedly with NZ$185,000 "hush money".

In addition Airways Corporation appears to have a "you scratch my back" arrangement with Lockheed, ordering a replacement air traffic control system from the US company without going to tender. At the same time a leaked report has revealed staff shortages among New Zealand air traffic controllers, which has caused questions about why the chief executive has gone to live in the UK when he should perhaps be concentrating on running air traffic control at home.

The New Zealand government won't comment until the investigation is complete. And Prescott's department of the environment, transport and regions (DETR) is equally tight lipped. However, the spectacle of air traffic bosses living abroad and standing to win millions, while ignoring shortages of frontline air traffic control staff doesn't bode well for the privatisation of British airspace.

AMERICAN families of victims who are attending the current Lockerbie trial at Camp Zeist in Holland are being briefed daily by a US justice department official, and many have had their fares paid at public expense. Pam Dix, the diligent secretary of the British bereaved families' association, and other members have had no such good fortune.

Unable to afford her own fare to the trial, she applied to the Lockerbie Trust for assistance. As the *Eye* reported (1001), the trust was set up after the disaster. Among its aims was to provide help for people affected by the disaster.

In 1991 a new trust was created which only envisages spending money on the town of Lockerbie itself. The trustees are all local councillors, and the chairman Russell Brown is the new Labour MP for the area. The trust has refused to allocate any money to bereaved families who want to attend the trial. In 1999 the trust approved spending £300,000 on a swimming pool, a golf club and a tennis club in Lockerbie. Investments by the trust at March 1999 were worth £200,000.

Anxious letters and phone calls to Mr Brown from Pam Dix have not been answered. In an angry letter to the prime minister, Pam Dix protests at the use of the trust funds and asks that Mr Brown should not be permitted to be present at meetings with Lockerbie relatives.

COMPLIMENTARY FLEECE WITH EVERY USED CAR PURCHASED*

Woking Motors advertisement

Street Of Shame

TWO years ago, a dozen hacks from the *Observer* sent an indignant letter to the *Eye* protesting at our suggestion that the paper's foreign editor, Len Doyle, was "rather too close to British intelligence for comfort".

Doyle, they insisted, "is a respected friend and highly regarded journalist and innuendo about his lack of impartiality does him a grave injustice".

Lo and behold, in this Monday's *Guardian*, ex-*Observer* hack David Leigh belatedly confirmed that Doyle was indeed "in contact with MI6", and encouraged his staff to pursue leads provided by "the men in shiny suits", as he called them. "We... had ended up, in effect, acting as government agents," Leigh concluded, though he hastily added that Doyle always "behaved scrupulously".

This doesn't quite tally with the experience of the *Observer*'s former diplomatic editor, Shyam Bhatia, who on 24 September 1997 was taken to lunch by Doyle with one of the shiny-suit brigade, a senior MI6 officer called Peter Noonan. They had barely ordered their drinks before Noonan revealed that MI6 boss Sir David Spedding was furious at a piece about him in that day's *Grauniad* by Francis Wheen. Noonan was determined to find out everything he could about the wretched Wheen. Where did he live? Was he married? Did he have children?

To Bhatia's astonishment and dismay, Doyle did his best to provide the information required. It may or may not be coincidence that Bhatia left the *Observer* soon afterwards.

Meanwhile Doyle is now foreign editor of the *Independent* (sic). Do the paper's editor and directors share his apparent view that journalists should inform on their colleagues to the spooks of Vauxhall Cross?

THE *Daily Mail* got very worked up last week over *Naked Jungle*, Channel 5's pisspoor nude gameshow presented by Keith Chegwin.

The moment TV plumbed new depths of degradation, screamed the front page banner head, urging readers inside to a double page spread of violent breast-beating (with pictures) in which stern moralist Edward Heathcoat Amory "witnessed a new milestone in the degradation of mainstream British television".

But the *Mail*, flagship of the Associated Newspapers fleet, really should look a little closer to home before sounding off. The next day its sister publication the *Evening Standard* produced something of a milestone in the degradation of mainstream British magazines. Alongside the headline *Balls!* the cover of ES Magazine carried a glossily naked close-up of the actor Keith Allen pointing at his hairy crotch, which was barely hidden behind a football.

ANOTHER triumph for Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill's super soaraway *Scotsman*. On the front page of his oh-so-respectable newspaper two weeks ago, Brillo ran a story about the royal family's internet plans, under the heading "Long to Domain Over Us: 'Queen.com'." Since no other address was given in the piece, readers assumed this was indeed Brenda's website.

Imagine their surprise, then, on visiting "Queen.com", to find that it is in fact "The most HARDCORE SEX experience on the Net!" – replete with "big fat horny bitches" and an "all new fuckfest!"

Perhaps Brillo Pad enjoys this sort of thing, but the Miss Jean Brodies among the paper's dwindling readership are not amused.

INTRODUCING the *Guardian*'s special "royal issue" this week, Christopher Hitchens dealt briskly with the Queen Mum's 100th birthday. "Of the old lady of Clarence House," he wrote, "I have nothing to say; literally nothing occurs to me."

This will come as a surprise to *Vanity Fair*'s editor, Graydon Carter, who has just taken delivery of a 4,000-word feature about the Queen Mother – written by, er, Christopher Hitchens.

FREELANCE hack and novelist Paul "Raging Bull" Pickering has been boasting of the six-figure cheque he has received from the Groucho Club. The *Express* revealed last week that the huge pay-out is a damages settlement following an incident in 1997 when Pickering "was attacked by a member of the bar staff with what was believed to be a corkscrew. It was thrust into his left eye, rendering it blind".

All very sad, of course. But Pickering was scarcely the innocent victim portrayed by the *Express*. As the *Eye* reported at the time, he arrived at the Groucho on the fateful evening having already been drinking at Simpson's-in-the-Strand since midday. After further refreshment he suddenly glassed a barman, who required several stitches.

Then, having been escorted to the foyer while Inspector Knacker was called, he was slumped over the reception desk in a state of repose when two unsuspecting visitors walked in. As they stood alongside his slumped form, Pickering rose up like a dinosaur emerging from the swamp and lashed out at them. For the next few minutes, until the police arrived, the demented novelist was held in a bear hug by a courageous barman. It was during their desperate grapple that Raging Bull was accidentally speared in the eye with a corkscrew.

Even before this debacle, as *Eye* readers may recall, Pickering had an appalling track record of violent eruptions brought on by excessive drinking. They include beating up his former mistress Mary Flanagan, an incident which resulted in Inspector Knacker being called to her home twice in one evening; unprovokedly breaking the nose of TV producer Anwar Bati at a party in the Polish Hearth Club; holding a broken bottle of Jack Daniels to the throat of Chatto & Windus editor Jonathan Burnham; headbutting Andy McKillop, his then paperback editor at Collins; throwing a glass of wine (vessel and contents) at *Time Out* hackette Maria Lexton; and hurling a wine bottle and glass at film producer Susan Morrall before attempting to headbutt her.

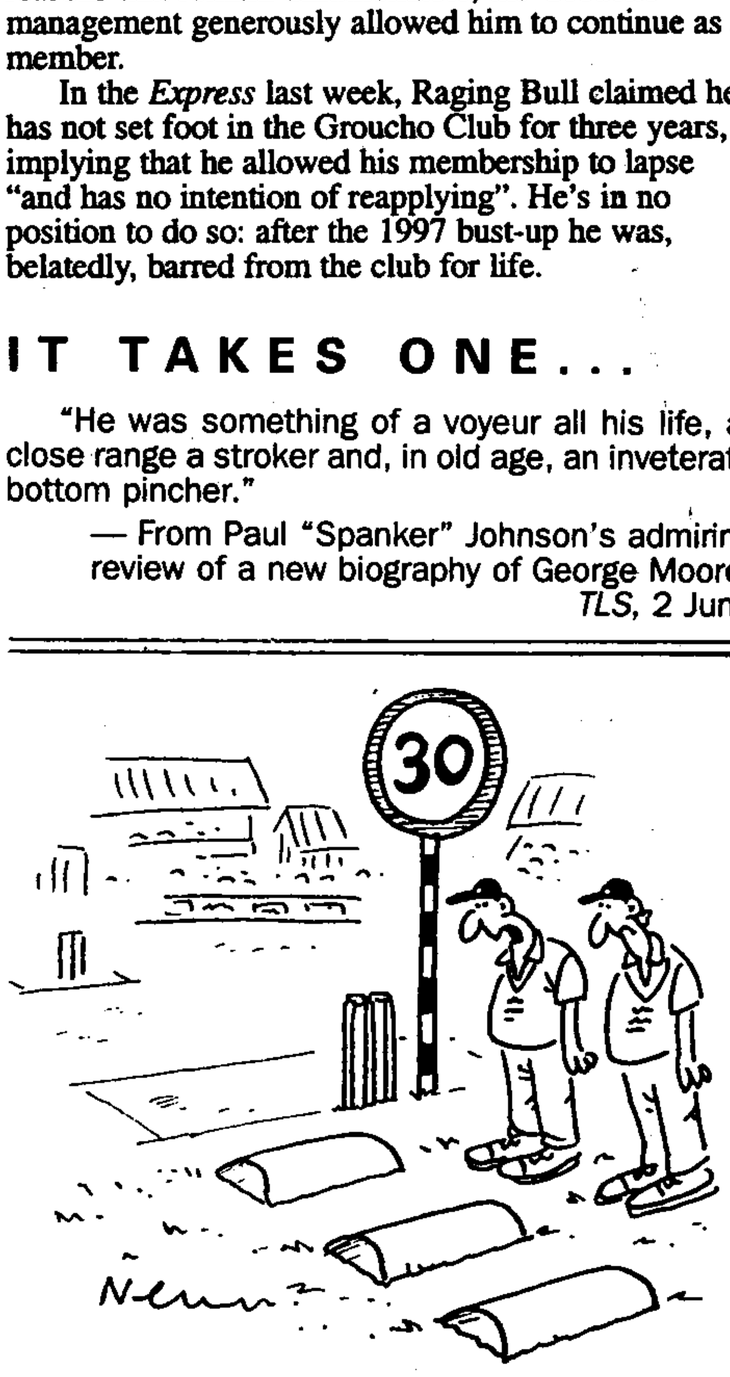
At the Groucho Club alone, he had plenty of "previous". At novelist Philip Kerr's stag party in April 1991 Pickering had to be ejected from the club after headbutting several fellow-guests including best man John Walsh, who performed his duties the next day sporting a livid, enpurpled eye. In December 1992 Pickering was again thrown out after an ugly dispute over his bill which culminated in his biting a waiter on the shoulder. But even after that attack, for reasons that remain unfathomable, the Groucho management generously allowed him to continue as a member.

In the *Express* last week, Raging Bull claimed he has not set foot in the Groucho Club for three years, implying that he allowed his membership to lapse "and has no intention of reapplying". He's in no position to do so: after the 1997 bust-up he was, belatedly, barred from the club for life.

IT TAKES ONE...

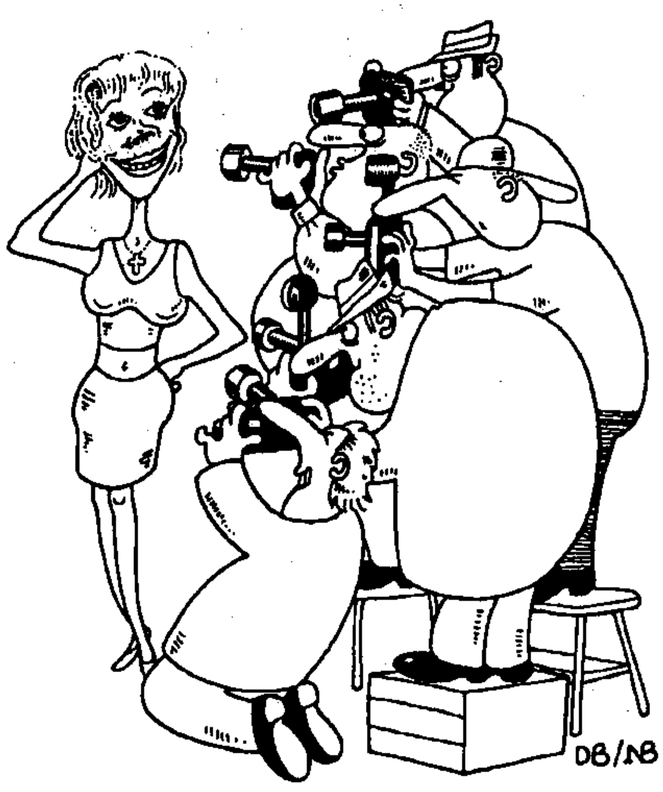
"He was something of a voyeur all his life, at close range a stroker and, in old age, an inveterate bottom pincher."

— From Paul "Spanker" Johnson's admiring review of a new biography of George Moore, *TLS*, 2 June



"We've worked out how to deal with the West Indian Fast Bowlers"

NEW OLD SAYINGS



No nose is good news

"I'M JUST taking pictures of people in as flattering a light as possible," shrugs Jason Fraser, our Man-In-The-Shrubbery-With-The-Long-Lens, whenever hacks with a conscience accuse him of being a paparazzo.

He *hates* being called a paparazzo and wrote a furious letter to the *Eye* last year denying that his photographic antics were in any way "intrusive".

True, he may have conducted the infamous auction of snog-pix of Diana and Dodi in August 1997 (sold to the *Sunday Mirror* for £250,000), but he was respectfully gutted when she died. "This is not the time to discuss how it will affect my business," he said, adding that he only ever recorded "some very happy moments of her life at a respectful distance, two or three hundred metres away".

His portfolio is still full of happy moments. Who could fail to enjoy his pics of Carol Vorderman in her "ultra-skimpy" swimsuit published in the *Sun* on 3 June, or his further studies of Carol's bikini later printed in the *Daily Mail* and *People* ("I'll take a G-string please, Carol")? Or the topless "Corrrtney Love", which appeared in the *Sun* on 1 June, snapped from a hidden location "a respectful distance" away?

On 12 March this year the *People* published a "touching display of togetherness" featuring the Duchess of Kent. As the paper noted, "she virtually withdrew from public life last year after revealing she has ME" – but that didn't stop our Jason and his ever-ready camera. Then there was that delightful long-range look at "grieving Mick Jagger" who had just lost his mother (*Sun*, 19 May). Perhaps Jason had forgotten what he said in an interview with the *Grauniad* in April: "I would never do to anybody what I wouldn't want done to myself. By that I mean that I don't do people who are in mourning or grieving."

Though the *Daily Mail* and *Mail on Sunday* are also regular customers, most of Jason's work is for the Mirror Group – including his grainy photos of "Camilla as you have NEVER seen her" (5 April), showing a 52-year-old woman enjoying what she thought was a private holiday in Mauritius. The pictures netted Fraser £20,000 from the *Mirror*, plus loads more in serial fees.

Even so Jason is not a paparazzo. If he were, editors such as the *Daily Mail*'s Paul Dacre ("Mail Leads The Way in Banning Paparazzi Pictures"), the *Sun*'s David Yelland ("the *Sun* will not succeed post-Diana if it is perceived to be nasty and vindictive") and the *Mirror*'s Piers Moron (who "unequivocally" welcomed PCC guidelines intended to "cut down on the market for paparazzi") would be guilty of monstrous humbug. Which, clearly, cannot be the case.

CITY Slicker James Hipwell, now reduced to writing for "Mo" Fayed's pisspoor *Punch*, has an interesting new sideline.

He has been asked by the Phoney Pharaoh to "babysit" his youngest son and enlighten him in the mysteries of the stock market.

HACKWATCH

Camilla Parker Bollocks

"SAD royal mistress Camilla Parker Bowles faced a life on the sidelines last night. For nearly 25 years, she has been Prince Charles's most loyal confidante. She longs to seal her love with a wedding. But now she will never marry the man she adores because HE has decided that marriage could cost him the throne." (Top royal hack James Whitaker, Mirror, 22 December 1995.)

"The chance that they [Charles and Camilla] will marry is now a very real one. I have said all along that I believe that one day these two will marry." (James Whitaker, *Sunday People*, 4 June 2000.)

"HM [the Queen], who is as moral a person as any who lives in this country, has made it abundantly clear that she does not enjoy Camilla Parker Bowles anywhere near her, let alone in her sight. She has told her most senior advisers that she doesn't want the woman near her because she is an adulteress... What a number of people don't appreciate is that the Queen is a God-fearing, practising Christian who attends church regularly and believes in the teachings of the Bible. She does not change her moral stance to suit her mood or because this might mean criticism of a member of her own family." (James Whitaker explains why the Queen will never meet Camilla, *Mirror*, 7 November 1998.)

"I understand that the Queen said Yes because it involved 'family'... But there is another major reason why the Queen finally relented and agreed to meet Camilla... I was told yesterday: 'The Queen is not governed by what people say and think but in this instance she is unquestionably responding to the public mood. We believe there has been a general shift of opinion on the ostracising of Mrs Parker Bowles. It was felt the two should at least meet'." (James Whitaker, *Mirror*, 5 June 2000.)

●

"The Queen was increasingly unsettled by the couple's relationship... She has not met Camilla for years and has no intention of doing so." (Top royal hack Christopher Morgan, *Sunday Times*, 31 January 1999.)

"Queen States She Will Never Meet Camilla. The Queen has told the most senior members of her household that she will never meet Camilla Parker Bowles." (Christopher Morgan, *Sunday Times*, 12 December 1999.)

"The Queen has had her first meeting with Camilla Parker Bowles since the collapse of the Prince of Wales's marriage to Diana. They met at a lunch yesterday..." (Christopher Morgan, *Sunday Times*, 4 June 2000.)

●

"Despite strong support for the couple [Charles and Camilla] from virtually all senior members of the royal family, the Queen continues to hold misgivings about the long-term consequences of the relationship. She remains implacably opposed to Mrs Parker Bowles..." (Top royal hack Richard Kay, *Daily Mail*, 1 May 2000.)

"After chatting to other guests, the Queen greeted Camilla with a smile. Mrs Parker Bowles curtsied and smiled back... Privately, the Queen is fond of Camilla." (Richard Kay, *Daily Mail*, 5 June 2000.)

●

"Nearly seven in 10 people think Prince Charles should marry Camilla Parker Bowles, a *Mirror* survey reveals today. Our poll – a day after the Queen met Camilla for the first time in almost 20 years – shows the nation is warming to Charles's long-time lover. Sixty-eight per cent backed a wedding and 77 per cent approved of the Queen's 'olive branch'." (Jane Kerr, *Mirror*, 5 June.)

"*Mirror* readers today tell Prince Charles not to marry Camilla Parker Bowles... Nearly nine out of ten of you calling our phone poll – 89 percent – said Charles should NEVER marry his long-term love. And 84 percent said the Queen should NEVER have endorsed the relationship by meeting Camilla at the weekend." (Jane Kerr, *Mirror* 6 June.)

●

"It is a natural thing for them [Charles and Camilla] to have their picture taken together leaving her sister's party... In no way does it presage a future marriage." (Top royal expert Lord St John of Fawsley, the *Times*, 30 January 1999.)

"I have always taken the view that there was no constitutional bar to marriage of the Prince and Camilla Parker Bowles... If they are continuing their friendship it would be natural for them to get married." (Lord St John of Fawsley, *Sunday People*, 4 June 2000.)

●

"Prince Charles has chosen to fulfil his destiny as future King by renouncing his relationship with Mrs Camilla Parker Bowles. He has decided to sacrifice his close friendship with the 46-year-old mother of two for the sake of his duty to the country... According to a royal confidant the Prince, now in Australia, has come to an 'irrevocable decision' on the matter." (Front-page "exclusive" by top royal confidant Nigel Dempster, *Mail on Sunday*, 30 January 1994.)

"Splendid news for the Prince of Wales and his constant companion Camilla Parker Bowles..." (Nigel Dempster, *Daily Mail*, 12 May 2000.)

●

"Prince Charles... has looked particularly happy and relaxed of late and it could be in the knowledge that Camilla will soon be free. It now seems more apparent than ever that this was the long-term plan arranged as far back as June 1992... It can only have been destructive to Camilla's relationship with her husband." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 11 January 1995.)

"Andrew Parker Bowles was a renowned adulterer and Charles did not break up his marriage." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 7 June 2000.)

"The Prince has been described as a selfish man, but he seems to be as caring of Camilla as she is of him... She brings out the best side in his nature." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 14 January 1993.)

"Prince Charles... is a man who is preoccupied with his own welfare and has little concern for those around him. It explains his passion for Mrs Parker Bowles, because she indulges him like a doting mother humouring a ghastly son." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 18 January 1995.)

"She [Diana] cruelly and falsely portrayed her husband as... selfish." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 7 June 2000.)

"When Prince Charles asked [Diana] to marry him he was 32 and in love with another woman... He was only marrying her to provide an heir." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 24 August 1994.)

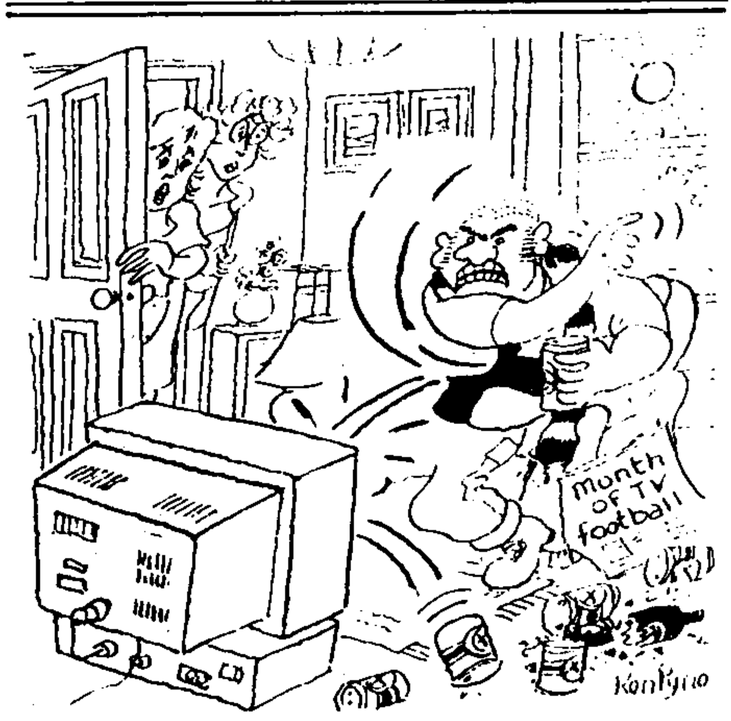
"[Prince Charles] wanted an heir, but without the inevitable disciplines and restrictions of marriage. He wanted to be left to lead a selfish bachelor-like existence, with the possible prospect of one day resuming his affair with his acquiescent mistress..." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 18 January 1995.)

"Prince Charles did not go into marriage with cynicism and the intention of fathering an heir before running back to his mistress. He's a deeply religious man who spoke his vows in St Paul's Cathedral in 1981 believing they were for better, for worse and for ever." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 7 June 2000.)

"The Prince has to make it utterly clear that he has no intention of marrying Camilla Parker Bowles and trying to make a divorced woman our Queen." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 8 December 1993.)

"I believe that [Charles] is going to make a determined effort to one day become king, with Camilla as his consort... If the prince decides to marry a divorcee who has been his mistress for more than 20 years, he may find that he's pushed us too far." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 11 January 1995.)

"As Camilla makes Charles happy and has always been loyal and discreet, the sooner he marries her the better. If a divorced prince can be king, why can't a divorced woman be queen? It seems total hypocrisy... Being king is a lonely and difficult job. I fail to see how anyone with sense or compassion could vindictively deny Charles the support of the strong, loyal woman he loves and adores." (Lynda Lee-Potter, *Daily Mail*, 7 June 2000.)



"He's an armchair hooligan"

IN THE TEAROOM

AFTER his pisspoor performance in front of the WI you'd think the last thing Tony Blair would want was the kind of open squabbling between cabinet members over Europe that's bound to remind everyone of John Major's fiasco years. But is the apparent cabinet split yet another cock-up or a cunning political ploy?

Peter Mandelson and Robin Cook have been quietly pressing for ages for a campaign aimed at softening-up the electorate for entry into the euro. They understand that there'll be no chance of winning a referendum on the issue unless the "pro" argument starts in earnest any day now. Of course they don't want to be too much to the forefront themselves in case it proves unpopular: that's why they've recruited that poor expendable sap Stephen Byers to be point man on this one.

But the chancellor wants none of it. Rehearsing for his Mansion House speech, he's been shuffling a pack of prompt cards with key words written on them. "Assessment... judgement... over-hasty... premature... five criteria... remain committed" – take your pick. All the ingredients in place, you'd think, for those irresponsible reptiles in the lobby to run a "government splits over Eurospat" story.

But where does this leave the prime minister? Just where he wants to be... as a kind of mystical embodiment of Joe Voter. As he scratches his head in an I-just-can't-make-my-mind-up kind of way we'll see that he truly shares our aspirations and our doubts and anxieties too. And when the time is right he'll don the mantle of leadership, and with a convincing display of pained reluctance, he'll take the decision for us.

But not if William Hague's new wheeze comes off. He gently test-marketed it last week, and consumer response is encouraging. The principle is simple: the punters don't really understand all the technical arguments about economic union, but one thing they're sure they're against is *political* union. So why not give them a referendum on that? Only by voting Tory will you get the opportunity, once and for all, to put the kibosh on federalism. Who knows, after putting up with months of boring eurotwaddle the voters might just leap at the chance.

'Urquhart'

Westminster colleagues of Frank Dobson fear he will explode if any attempt is made to pin the blame on him.

Grauniad

NEARLY seven months after the first detailed complaint into the processing of internal Labour party data was handed to the data protection registrar – namely the handing out of lists of Labour party members to the Frank Dobson mayoral campaign team – and Dobbo is off the hook.

Elizabeth France, the data protection commissioner who has taken seven months to examine 30 or so allegations of malpractice and rewind the video of John Ware's *Panorama* exposé of the *Blair Mayor Project*, at least has the gumption to grovel. In a statement largely ignored by the press, she said this of her investigation and toothless Office of the Data Protection Registrar: "I am pleased we have concluded our consideration of this matter... though I had hoped to do earlier."

So why the long wait? "The delay has been partly because of demands on my staff, but as I have no powers to compel anyone to be interviewed, I am also dependent on cooperation." And while members of the Dobson campaign team "did agree to be interviewed... because of their understandable wish to put certain legal arguments to me beforehand, and given that key members of the campaign team were inevitably busy... it did not prove possible to arrange interviews until after that election... By this time the campaign had been disbanded and was no longer holding membership data."

Given that France could not speak to Dobson campaigners until the offending data had been spirited away, what was her recommendation? "The commissioner has further decided that it is not in the public interest to pursue her investigation in the light of time during which the campaign was unregistered and the fact that it was effectively disbanded on 18 February 2000." No doubt agents of Robert Mugabe's ruling Patriotic Front are even now planning to install a data protection agency modelled on that enjoyed by the "Mother country" in time for Zimbabwe's general election.

AS WE reported in the last *Eye*, actor-turned-politico Tony "Baldrick" Robinson has been fighting a vigorous campaign on behalf of his daughter's ex-boyfriend, Joe Goldberg, who was barred from running for a second term as chairman of the Labour Students organisation. But it seems we may have been rather hasty in dismissing Baldrick's claim that Goldberg was a victim of dirty tricks.

The rules of the contest are simple. The more party members a college can claim, the more delegates it has to the annual conference of Labour Students – and, therefore, the more influence it has over who becomes national chairman.

But the Millbank-preferred candidate, LSE student Brendan Cox, may have been recruiting rather too energetically to judge by a voicemail message he left for another LSE undergraduate shortly before a crucial hustings at the Labour club in March: "Hi Cath, it's Brendan here. Hope you are well. You're now a member of the Labour party and you've been sorted... Can you just give me a ring to confirm that you can make that [meeting], we need as many people there as possible. If you bring any of your friends, it doesn't really matter if they're not Labour club members as long they don't tell anybody." What mattered, he added, was packing the meeting with people who would vote for a pro-Cox slate of delegates to annual conference.

Suspicions were further aroused by the names of some new members who suddenly joined the party – including an LSE student called Derek Hatton (who gave his address as Walworth Road, London), and the equally implausible Jeremy Bentham of University College, London.

After receiving a formal complaint Labour's national executive committee (NEC) asked a trade union representative, Kathy Speight, to look into the affair. Alas, she reported back that there were far too many allegations against Brendan Cox to be investigated properly – whereupon the NEC approved Cox's candidacy and ruled out Goldberg instead, on the bizarre grounds that he couldn't be a member of Labour Students since he had not been a "full-time student" during the previous year.

Well, indeed not: he had been national chairman of the Labour Students, which is a full-time sabbatical post. The same was true of his predecessors, yet several of them were allowed to run for a second term.

Unlike them, however, Goldberg had already infuriated party apparatchiks by his willingness to talk to left-wingers as well as right-wingers – and by his suggestion that the London Labour Students, as one of the party's "affiliated societies", ought to hold a ballot on whether Frank Dobson or Ken Livingstone should be the party's mayoral candidate, rather than simply casting a block vote for the Millbank option.

Can these heinous crimes by any chance be related to the party's shameless and successful attempt to nobble Baldrick's young chum?

WHILE Labour accepts its selection process for the Tottenham by-election was one of the closest in recent times, it also seems not to have been one of the cleanest.

The winning candidate David Lammy, the first British black lawyer to attend Harvard law school, appears to be the perfect new Labourite. Indeed, the party HQ at Millbank made little effort to hide its preference for Lammy when the seat fell vacant after the death of Bernie Grant.

But Lammy may not be as capable as was hoped. When his manifesto arrived at the Greater London Labour party, it was so bad and unappealing the press office hastily rewrote it.

The Non-Mobile Phone

"Hi, it's me. I'm not on the train – I'm in a glass box that smells of piss. It's covered in ads for prostitutes and there's a lunatic hammering on the door"

PORTCULLIS House, the new office block for Westminster's overspill MPs, has received a lot publicity for its £1m-per-head price tag, but little for the way the contracts for the £250m block opposite Big Ben were awarded.

Take the contract for the building's distinctive copper cladding, for example. Last year a high court judge condemned parliament and its employees for flouting both its own laws and European law in favouring a £34m bid from Anglo-German company Seele-Alvis over a £32m bid from Harmon Facades, a US company.

Judge Humphrey Lloyd was particularly scathing of Andrew Makepeace, a senior civil servant and the project sponsor responsible for awarding the contracts. He acted in a way which was "not an honest attempt to perform his duty". He had acquiesced in a "travesty of tender evaluation designed to shut out Harmon" and he had falsified the reasons for his decision.

Said the judge: "This was described for Harmon as covering his tracks and in my view provides cogent evident of dishonest conduct on the apart of a public official. Mr Makepeace plainly knew that the letter did not set out the true reasons. I have therefore no doubt in holding that the House of Commons was guilty of the tort of misfeasance."

The judge's "profound disquiet" prompted Commons speaker Betty Boothroyd to appoint Sir Thomas Legg QC to investigate whether Commons employees and MPs behaved correctly in making the award. He reported last March but the details, according to a Commons spokeswoman, remain sub-judice, presumably until the court decides how many millions of pounds in taxpayers' money will have to paid in compensation and costs to Harmon. We can only assume Sir Thomas has exonerated staff. For despite the damning judgement, the man still running the extravagant project, which opens shortly, is Andrew Makepeace.

SMOOTHIE Blairite and Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) wonk Matthew Taylor has generously agreed to speak at the agm of lefty pressure group, Chartist.

Sadly he is less than complimentary about his opposing number, Labour NEC member Ann Black. "Happy to have put afternoon in my diary", he wrote to the conference organisers. "Can't stand Ann Black."

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Brochure

NOOKS and CORNERS

NO character in Sierra Leone is more fascinating than Roger Crooks who – much to his irritation – has been the subject of a string of parliamentary questions from Andrew Mackinlay, Labour MP for Thurrock.

Mackinlay, a member of the foreign affairs select committee, wants to know how many foreign office staff and military personnel have met Mr Crooks and why. Frustrated by evasive answers, he persuaded Denis MacShane, parliamentary private secretary to Robin Cook, to write to his boss about Mr Crooks.

When he did so, MacShane included a copy of a Sierra Leone information bulletin suggesting that Mr Crooks had been expelled from Sierra Leone for trafficking in arms. Among the answers given to Mackinlay was a curt reference to the fact that in 1994 Mr Crooks had been interviewed by Scotland Yard's SO13 (anti-terrorist) branch in connection with a matter "that involved the supply of firearms".

Mr Mackinlay wanted to know if Crooks was involved in the supply of arms and, if so, given the appalling state of affairs in Sierra Leone, wasn't this a matter of interest to the authorities? The reply came from Peter Hain, the former firebrand who is now a minister of state at the FO. He wrote: "We have no reason to believe that Crooks was involved in arms smuggling between Sierra Leone and Northern Ireland."

The ministerial answer did not properly address the question, which did not even mention smuggling arms to Northern Ireland. The point was simpler. Was Mr Crooks involved in any supply of any arms at all and, if so, what and when? The question is still unanswered.

Most MPs assumed Mackinlay was asking because he served on the select committee into Sierrra Leone over the Sandline affair, in which Crooks played a small part by supplying a helicopter to the mercenary company. But Mackinlay's interest had another source: Det Insp John Redgrave of Scotland Yard, who lives in Mackinlay's constituency.

Redgrave was one of the senior officers who investigated an alleged plot to sell an enormous batch of US arms via Sierra Leone. The contact for the deal in Sierra Leone was Roger Crooks. Crooks came to London in 1994, when he was surprised to be interviewed by Scotland Yard

In the event, the deal fell through and the investigation was called off. Crooks returned to Sierra Leone. But not for long. In 1997 the elected President Kabbah heard of the deal and expelled Crooks from the country. Again, not for long. In May 1990 he was allowed back and is now refurbishing his luxury Freetown Hotel, which is earmarked for extended and no doubt lucrative occupation by UN military forces.

'Backbiter'

READERS may recall the sad case of St Mary's former Roman Catholic Cathedral in Middlesborough (*Eye* 972) — itself a sort of Victorian Wild West town boasting little of interest.

Most buildings of interest were ruthlessly destroyed in the lunatic clearances of the town centre planned in the 1960s. But one thing worth looking at was this noble and austere Gothic church of 1872-76 designed by Goldie & Child.

It had beautiful furnishings and its glory was a 16th century Italian painting, given by the ironmaster Henry Bolckow and set into the reredos for the benefit of the faithful — whose pennies had built the church.

But it was too good for the modern diocese of Middlesborough, which decided to swim with the tide and abandon its old cathedral and build a new one in the style of a Tesco supermarket right on the edge of town — only accessible to those with cars. When this new "cathedral" was opened in 1986, the old one was run down and then closed.

They wanted to demolish it but, alas, it was a listed building. So the fittings were ripped out and the fabric left to be vandalised. Then the diocese argued that the redundant church should be de-listed as everything of interest in the interior had been taken out. Fortunately, English Heritage disagreed, arguing that the building was of value even though it stood on the wrong side of the railway tracks in a part of the town centre that had been depopulated. Indeed, an alternative use might have been the catalyst for urban regeneration.

So last year the diocese applied for listed building consent for demolition. This was refused and, a few months ago, the secretary of state called the case in for public inquiry. And then, oh dear, two weeks ago, on 1 June, the church caught fire and was so badly damaged by this "suspicious blaze" that it will be demolished. Such a tragedy. But God moves in mysterious ways. And now the taxpayer is spared the expense of a public inquiry. There is often a word for this sort of thing and it begins with an "A". I mean, of course, Accident.

In my earlier article I defended myself from any possible accusation of anti-Catholicism by quoting the *Catholic Herald* on the Middlesborough case. An editorial rightly accused the diocese of techniques used by "the more unscrupulous type of property developer" and suggested that this "history of Philistinism" should make the church authorities feel uneasy. I look forward to reading what the *Catholic Herald* has to say about this final chapter in the story of the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

WHAT is that well known phrase or saying to do with rats and sinking ships? I am interested to see that My Lord Rogers of Riverside is now distancing himself from The Dome, criticising the lack of any coherent "vision" and denying all responsibility for the "odium" which now overwhelms the wretched thing.

This is surely significant as the bronzed and relaxed superstar is usually all too keen to bask in the glory of any project with which he or his firm is associated — like the Pompidou Centre. But he can't really deny the responsibility for his own role in this cultural and social disaster which, as I never tire of repeating, has drained huge sums of money from so many worthwhile projects.

Someone in Rogers' office, one Michael Davies, apparently designed the large circular tent in the first place, and Rogers sold the idea first to the last Conservative government and then, when it looked as if it might be cancelled by "new" Labour, he helped persuade his close friend Tony Blair to stick with it.

The whole problem with The Dome is that the structure, rather than an idea, came first — and nobody could think of what to put in the huge, amorphous interior space inside the bloody thing. So Rogers is quite as much to blame as Michael Heseltine, Simon Jenkins, Peter Mandelson and the rest.

Just a little bit more on The Dome. I see that the government wishes further to control (and starve) our museums and art galleries by insisting that quotas of ethnic minority visitors are met. Yet, if you bother to go to The Dome, it is striking that your fellow visitors are overwhelmingly white. Cool Britannia hasn't quite worked. The only black faces to be seen are those of the workforce. Interesting.

'Piloti'

TUC NEWS

MORE trouble in the GMB regions: Robert Parker, Scotland regional secretary, has been accused by his former personal assistant of bullying and sexual harassment.

Margaret McAvoy, who has been off with stress since last November, is due to give evidence before a union internal tribunal later this year. Parker last hit the headlines over his Roger Lyons-style expenses extravaganza (£750 for a lunch in Brighton, for example). Like Lyons the MSF chief, Parker was also cleared after an internal probe into his hotel and food bills.

Elsewhere Gary Jones, Lancashire regional secretary, has been found guilty of engineering the dismissal of branch secretary Carol Porter. She had been wrongly accused of encouraging GMB members to defect to the T&GWU. The employment tribunal found that she was unfairly disciplined and victimised because she was due to appear against the GMB in support of a colleague in a sex discrimination case.

In a written ruling, the tribunal said of Jones: "We did not regard Mr Jones as a witness of truth in relation to this (a reference to a letter from branch presidents) or any other matter." And of the other officials, they said: "None of the regional committee members struck us as being witnesses of truth."

With Ken Gregory, West Midlands supremo, still locked in a series of tribunal cases involving allegations of harassment, bullying and intimidation, that only leaves seven regional secretaries with an untainted record to run for general-secretary John Edmonds' job if he decides to stand down.

'Blackleg'

IN THE COURTS

NAKED pictures seem to be the in-thing journalistically, so it's fitting that after four years of legal wrangling an anxiously awaited copyright infringement case has finally been scheduled for Belfast's high court.

Sammy Wilson, the city's new lord mayor and one of Ian Paisley's least comatose assembly men, is suing companies controlled by Tony O'Reilly and Lord (Clive) Hollick. In what seems like a suicidal act, both distinguished newspaper proprietors are defending publication of a set of stolen holiday photos showing Wilson and his girlfriend Sharon Rivers wandering around nude.

Sometime in 1996 25 colour negatives were mysteriously lifted from a house belonging to one of Wilson's friends. Various conspiracy theories have emerged (several involving MI5), but whoever was to blame, a dozen shots eventually appeared in a *Penthouse*-style spread in O'Reilly's *Sunday World*. The following day the Irish edition of the *Star* also got into the act, the latter published jointly by O'Reilly and Lord Hollick.

Whether the case will shed any further light on the missing photos is unclear, but Lord Justice Campbell has set a full week aside for the joint Wilson-Rivers hearing, beginning on 9 October when it's likely to be standing room only.

One Belfast lawyer reckons that whilst the breach of copyright claim must inevitably succeed, the papers are making a stand on the breach of confidence suit for fear of a precedent being set. It's likely they will argue that Wilson and Rivers were photographed in a public place – the great outdoors – and they can't therefore be seen as private pictures. Few would see this as a major stand for press freedom, however and Lord Wakeham's press complaints commission seems uncharacteristically to have no opinion on the matter.

JUST FANCY THAT!

Brian Russell

IN a report of the trial of John Holmes and Sylvia Paterson on March 30 we published a photograph of a man described as 'Banjo the Clown', alias Paul Thorlsog, who had given evidence. The photograph wrongly showed Mr Brian David Russell, alias 'Brillo the Clown', who had nothing to do with the trial. We apologise to Mr Russell for any embarrassment caused.

— Daily Mail, 23/5/00

"It's a bit bland, I'm afraid – I've sold my kitchen to a chain"

DOING THE ROUNDS

No complaints

"IMPRESSED? Dissatisfied? Concerned? Help us to help you". So boasts a leaflet from the Maudsley NHS Trust encouraging psychiatric patients to comment on "how we can improve our services.

As it says: "Complaints may highlight problems in service delivery and lead to improvements in care...." According to the leaflet, however, all formal complaints should be made in writing to the general manager at Warlingham Park Hospital in Surrey – which used to be part of the Maudsley but was closed three years ago and was recently levelled.

Said one consultant: "Does this explain why the management at the Maudsley continues blissfully unaware of the disasters it creates?" Either way, psychiatric patients are being urged to write letters to a non-existent hospital.

More complaints not welcome...

"Dear MD,

"Thanks for exposing postcode prescribing of dementia drugs at Ealing Hammersmith and Fulham NHS Trust (*Eye* 1001). On the day of publication the Old Age Psychiatrist who is clinical director was not pleased and reduced one of my colleagues to tears on the assumption that it was she who had spoken to you. More interestingly yet, we have all received a three-line whip memo advising us that on the 14th of June we have to go to the trust chief executive's office in order to 'discuss the recent article in *Private Eye* which featured the trust". It seems that the chief executive is determined both to find out who and to give us all a bollocking. We're all a bit shit-scared, and have persuaded the Prof. of Psychiatry to attend and one of my colleagues is taking legal advice. One doctor at Ealing is so scared he shuts his doors and windows before he talks on the phone..."

"Bad news – your implants aren't just soya, they're GM soya"

Whitewash

THE Ritchie report into the gynaecological devastation caused by Rodney "First Class Surgeon but the nurses call me Butcher" Ledward is the usual old bollocks. Something must be done... lessons will be learned... blah de blah de blah.

After Ledward the failings have been loosely directed at managers, but none has been called to account, disciplined or asked to retrain. Why did the health authority not act, having paid out for Ledward's failed surgery on at least 19 occasions between 1980 and 1994? Why was he not sacked, rather than allowed to retire and keep his full pension? Why did no one analyse the HES (hospital episode statistics) for Ledward's 16-year reign to see if his complication rates were higher? And how did he become a consultant in the first place?

In M.D.'s book *Trust Me, I'm a Doctor* a professor of obstetrics who worked with Ledward as a junior doctor is quoted a saying: "He was a cowboy even then. The worst I've ever come across in my career. Whoever gave him good references and supported his consultant appointment perjured their soul to the devil and will carry their consequences to the grave."

The professor was asked to give a statement to the Ritchie inquiry but the very murky world of consultant appointments was not tackled head on. Alas, surgeons do not have to perform a practical at interviews but someone, somewhere must have written Rodney sparkling references. I think we should be told who.

M.D.

"Fresh... natural... organic... d'you think we're made of money

SIGNAL FAILURES

Filling the Underground hole

AN innocuous financial package for transport announced in the last budget turns out to have been a clever Trojan horse to slip extra money for tube privatisation past a sceptical public, just as the London elections were hotting up.

The paltry £280m included token allocations to measures like road-safety education for children (£5m) and cleaner buses and taxis (£6m). Those sums were dwarfed by a £65m windfall for London Underground, ostensibly to pay for better escalators and more reliable train services.

No doubt the accounts will be organised to show that that was where the money was spent. But a recent Commons answer shows why London Transport needed such a handout: to make up for some of the money it has spent on the public-private partnership (PPP) scheme instead of escalators and signals. By March this year, according to the answer, LT had paid £60.3m for external consultants to work on the PPP and LU's restructuring.

Consultants are needed because LU's reorganisation has triggered an exodus of experienced managers (some of whom have become consultants). That loss in itself was bound to affect the tube's routine operation, but LU has also sidelined dozens of its remaining managers to beaver away at the half-baked PPP scheme to separate infrastructure maintenance from train operation and privatise the former.

In 1998 1,820 underground trains were delayed by 15 minutes or more (on a system already affected by diversion of resources to the Jubilee line extension – Eye 986). In 1999, as PPP preparations got into full swing, that figure rose to 2,178 trains. The rush to have the Jubilee line extension ready for the stampede to the millennium dome in January and February has not helped, as the new equipment has had to be debugged while in public service. Faults on the new section have hit passengers on the original half of the Jubilee line.

The current process at LU replicates the preparations for British Rail's privatisation, when great sums of public money were thrown at an organisation whose performance promptly went down the pan. The ex-BR network has still not recovered from its own haemorrhage of experience six years ago and the splitting of infrastructure management from operation of services; performance is still generally poor even though old hands like Chris Green, now chief executive of Virgin Trains, have returned from the wilderness. No lesson has been learned, however, and it may be many years before LU can pull itself out of the hole "new" Labour is fanatically digging for it.

● WHILE there is no shortage of public money to prop up London Underground's PPP, cash for rail is so scarce in other parts of the UK that routes in Northern Ireland could soon close.

Civil servants have been spinning the idea that the province could be stripped of some of its rail services, after a study found £183m is needed over 10 years to bring them up to modern safety standards. It seems that Labour may deal with this millstone by turfing people out of the trains and into road vehicles. That, of course, would lead to many more deaths and injuries, but the inferior safety of road transport is not regarded as a government problem.

● ON 5 May the Eye (1001) expressed disquiet at the condition of Railtrack's fencing beside lines where electricity is delivered to trains via a "third rail" at ground level. Two days later Brian Byng, aged 10, was electrocuted after touching a high-voltage railway line at Cosham, near Portsmouth. He died in hospital after four days in intensive care. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) has now realised that fencing at that location is "of inadequate standard, broken down or absent altogether thereby allowing trespass, including by children, to occur". The HSE has ordered Railtrack to remedy the situation at Cosham – but not at any other places where fencing is inadequate.

'Dr B Ching'

Down on the Fish Farm

SUMMERTIME... and the living's uneasy for Scottish shellfish farmers. After more than a year large chunks of West Highland waters are still closed to scallop fishing because of amnesic shellfish poisoning (ASP – see *Eye* 981).

In the human food chain ASP "eats brains". But according to the Scottish Executive (SE), ASP occurs naturally. It has nothing to do with the thousands of tonnes of shit dumped in our coastal waters by factory-salmon farmers. So that's all right, then.

Loch Roag on the Island of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides is the most intensively farmed sea loch in Europe. On the same day the SE lifted the ASP ban on scallop fishing in Loch Roag it imposed a ban on mussel fishing — because of an outbreak of diarrhoetic shellfish poisoning (DSP). The SE says DSP is naturally occurring and has nothing whatsoever to do with... yes, you guessed. But until the arrival of fish farming in Loch Roag no toxic outbreaks of shellfish poisoning had ever been recorded.

Mrs Isabel Founde lives near Loch Ewe in Wester Ross. She has been eating shellfish gathered from Culconich beach for years and has never been sick doing so. Two weeks ago, after eating razor fish she and her husband were violently ill. Their neighbour, Donnie Mackenzie, reports razor fish have virtually disappeared from the beach at Mellon Charles. He used to collect 400 during a single outing. Two months ago he found one. The only change in Loch Ewe in recent years is that there are now fish farms there.

In the Orkney Island of Shapinsay razor fish are called "spoots". Islanders have collected and eaten them without ill effect for centuries. Local man Neil Sinclair reported that most of the people, including his wife, who ate razor fish collected in early May from Veantrow Bay suffered severe bouts of sickness and diarrhoea. In January (*Eye* 1001) 34 tonnes of fish farm food went overboard from farm cages in the bay. Divers reported rotting, grey-slime covered fish meal covering the seabed.

Chefs in two hotels on the Isle of Skye are losing fingernails. They think this might be related to repeatedly handling slime-covered farm salmon. One hotel has allegedly banned farm salmon from its menu. It is also alleged that fish farm workers regularly sell in Portree mussels that have been scraped from fish farm cages. In 1996, after eating mussels scraped from fish farm cages in Loch Seaforth in the Hebrides, 49 London diners reported vomiting and diarrhoea (*Eyes passim*), subsequently identified as DSP. Because they supposedly come from clean, unpolluted waters Scottish shellfish are synonymous with quality?

'Old Trout'

Agricultural cover in the UK rarely extends beyond fire damage. David Waite of specialist adjuster David Waite Associates said: "I can't see many insurers rushing into insuring GM crops — it's too much of a hot potato."

Post magazine

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

DIRTY OLD MAN

FOLLOWING the Waterhouse report into abuse at children's homes in North Wales, attention focused on paedophile activity — and no one thought to ask if elderly people in the care of the social services department of the former Clwyd council had been looked after properly.

In recent weeks, however, officers from Flintshire (a county council formed after Clwyd's break-up in 1996) have been quietly contacting former employees to track down copies of a critical report into the running of Hafan Glyd elderly people's home... in order to destroy it.

The suppressed 1996 document reveals that abuse of elderly women in Hafan Glyd went on under the noses of dozy managers. Nothing was done about a male resident who sexually abused female residents until a whistleblower alerted the council, which then transferred him to sheltered accommodation without warning the warden about his history.

The report condemned poor record keeping and inadequate care at Hafan Glyd, but manager Jean MacFarlane has so far escaped public criticism. In fact she has done rather nicely: taking early retirement and a golden handshake of £32,000, only to be rehired a week later.

Alas the district auditor decided that she had received £21,000 more than she should have done and that paperwork authorising her payoff had been altered. The auditor has refused to sign off Flintshire's accounts until this is resolved.

Flintshire responded by temporarily suspending Jonathan Bacon, director of social services, and Jeanette Antrobus, personnel director. But an "investigative" panel of councillors failed to ask them who altered the paperwork and why MacFarlane was reemployed.

Flintshire's attempts to sweep things under the carpet are entirely unrelated to the fact that Antrobus is a close friend of Tom Middlehurst, local Welsh assembly member and minister for education and training. Or that Delyn MP David Hanson's wife Margaret is chair of the social services committee of Flintshire county council.

UNSAVOURY FAIRWAY

THE Sutherland area planning committee of Highland council has just received an application to erect a 70ft memorial above the village of Helmsdale to the thousands of crofters who were thrown off the land during the Highland clearances of the 19th century.

The statue, depicting a dispossessed family, would rival the controversial monument, a few miles away at Golspie, to the first Duke of Sutherland, the man who kicked 15,000 people off the land to make way for two hundred thousand sheep.

Sharing the front page of the local *Northern Times* with the story about the clearances memorial is an item about a planning application the council has already passed — for tycoon Peter de Savary to build a £4m second championship golf course at his fearsomely exclusive Carnegie Club at Skibo Castle, haunt of showbiz types such as Catherine Zeta Jones, Michael Douglas and Jack Nicholson.

Following the success of the application, sherriff's officers promptly served an eviction notice on Graham Burnett, a tenant farmer with three young children. Pulrossie Farm, which Burnett's family have worked for the past 40 years, is inconveniently in the way of the fairways. No doubt the councillors and the duke's ghost will savour the irony.

● DURHAM cobbler Tony Martin (*Eyes passim*), who has devoted his entire window display to the misdemeanours of the Labour city council, has now set up an entertaining website (www.cobblers2thecouncil.tsx.org). But when he made it known he was planning to go on the web, strange things started happening. Someone rang the local drug squad with a false tip that he was selling under-the-counter narcotics; he was warned that bugging devices had been planted in his shop; and a woman came in and told him that if he didn't call off his campaign his "legs would be broken". Police have so far refused Tony Martin's request to allow him to examine local CCTV film in an attempt to identify his mystery visitor.

Not wanted: skip at Hartlepool Labour HQ after last month's elections when Mandy's party lost to a Lib Dem-Tory coalition.

KNOWSLEY COMMENT

THE case of Lee Kinch, the 14-year-old stabbed to death by schizophrenic Leo Gavin in 1996, continues to disturb residents of Knowsley on Murkeyside (*see Eye* 993).

People living on the estate where Gavin, 36, lived, knew he was a danger to the public. Warnings about him were written on bus shelters and beer mats in the pubs. Yet local councillors in St Gabriel's ward seemed oblivious.

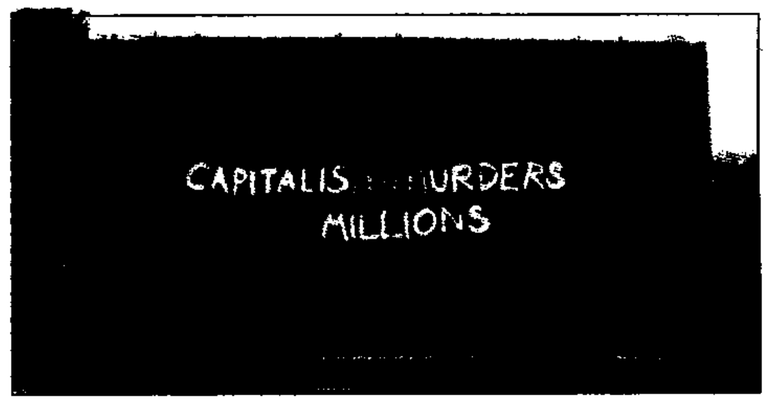
Following Lee's death his family were promised a full investigation, jointly conducted by St Helens and Knowsley health authority and the council. Although the health authority appeared happy for the report to be made public, the council refused, much to the upset of the Kinch family.

Was it, locals asked, because the report was critical of the role of ward councillors – one of whom happened to be council leader Jim Keight? That cannot have been the case because Keight said he had no idea what was in the report. The council eventually handed the report to the Kinch family — on condition they keep its contents secret — after they began legal action.

Knowsley people are at least grateful for the efforts of one councillor, Dennis Baum, who campaigned vigorously on behalf of the family to get the report released. Unfortunately his sense of civic responsibility was in breach of the council's code of *omerta* and has earned him indefinite suspension from Knowsley Labour party.

GRAFFITI CORNER *Oxford*

Submitted by **The Oxy Crew**



EXES OF ENTHUSIASM

SNOUTS in the trough in south London, where councillors in Labour-run Croydon and Southwark are competing to see who can run up the largest expenses bill.

Croydon councillors last year claimed £743,825 – an impressive 200 percent increase on the previous year's £259,943. Former council leader Valerie Shawcross claimed £21,135, despite resigning her seat to become a member of the Greater London assembly before the year was up.

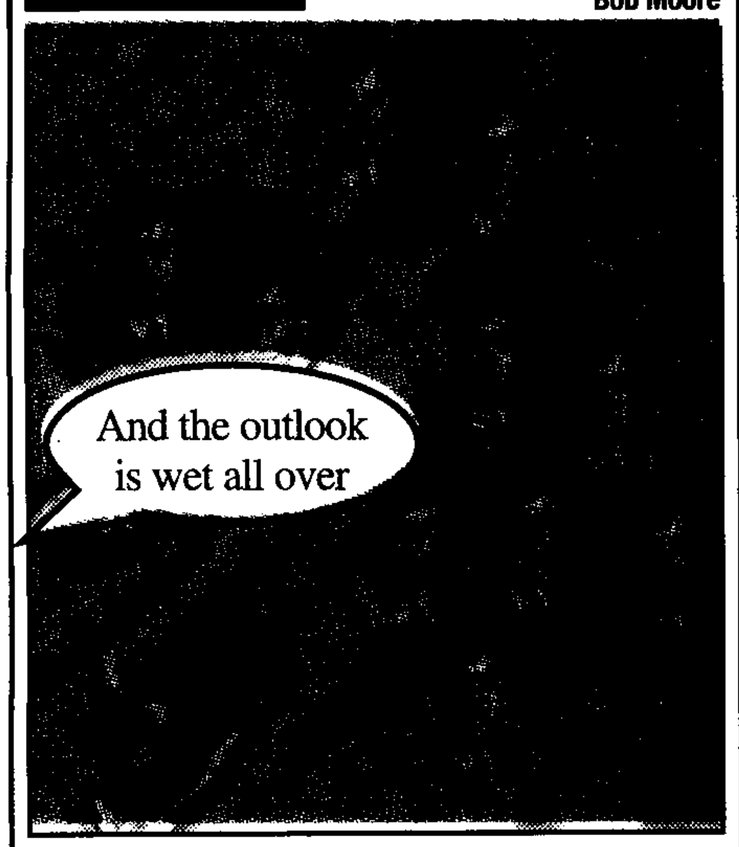
In Southwark, the ruling Labour group has agreed a modest 100 percent increase, to a total of around £900,000. Newly elected leader Stephanie Elsy is set to receive £35,000 this year. Between them 19 of Southwark's 32 Labour councillors will share £550,000 for "special responsibilities".

With so much cash about, Southwark's 10,000-strong workforce may have hoped for a slice of the cake. Alas chief executive Bob Coomber has tabled a paper which proposes that their number be cut by 9,000 to just 1,000. It argues that more services should be "outsourced" — which would leave councillors even more time to twiddle their thumbs and count their exes.

● EVENTS in Lambeth show how far Labour has become the Lobby Party. Jim Dickson, who recently stepped down as council leader, has taken a job in the London affairs unit of parliamentary lobbyists GJW. He has been replaced by Tom Franklin, who until four months ago was a lobbyist for Saatchi-owned Rowland Public Affairs. By an amazing coincidence GJW represents Crapita, the firm which brought chaos to Lambeth's housing benefit system. Dickson's new boss Jeremy Fraser is another man well used to fiascos – he was the manager of Frank Dobson's mayoral campaign. And Tom Franklin's experience at Rowland should come in handy. He represented the UK Atomic Energy Authority, a body skilled at keeping disasters secret for as long as possible.

SPLIT personalities

Bob Moore



Bill Giles Brandreth

High Principals

PROFESSOR David Vande-Linde, vice chasncellor of Bath University, has achieved a coup on the vexed question of intellectual property rights.

The tradition in older, established universities, including Bath, is that the copyright in work created by lecturers, philosophers, scientists and other staff resides in the people who create it. For more than two years, however, he and his supporters on the university council have been striving to switch the copyright in such work to the university. He has now succeeded.

Few lecturers and staff produce anything original anyway. But those lecturers who devise courses for industry or other work for outside bodies, and then leave the university for whatever reason, may find they lose considerable sums of money. Don't be surprised if this "tidying up" of "outdated" rules is copied by other older universities.

● SAD news from New College, Nottingham, where the party to celebrate the daming of principal Dame Pat Morgan-Webb has been abruptly called off.

Rachel Tyler, assistant to the college chief executive, has circulated a memo entitled DAME PAT'S BIG NIGHT OUT. "Unfortunately," she writes, "it has been necessary to cancel the above event which was due to take place on 9th June. I realise that a lot of you will be disappointed but hope that there will be another event in the future."

The Eye's contacts in the college report very little disappointment but a shocking degree of celebration – and a silly notion that the party was called off because it was heralded in Eye 1000.

TV

Location, Location, Location (Channel 4)
The Property Show (ITV)
All The Right Moves (BBC2)

THE most predictably boring thing said by the English middle classes after dinner parties is that the most predictably boring thing said by the English middle classes during dinner parties is the ritual discussion of who's made most money out of house moves and how much the value of this very three-storey townhouse has grown in the hour since you sat down to eat your rustic appetiser from the *River Cafe Cookbook*.

But television — with its focus groups and viewer access forums — is obsessed with reflecting the daily concerns of the audience, and so that notorious dinner-party conversation has now spawned three separate television series in which people are followed with cameras as they try to trade up to their dream home.

In **Location, Location, Location** (C4), a couple billed as "professional property hunters Kirstie Allsop and Phil Spencer" take up a game-show challenge to find within four days a house within the budget of a contestant. Phil and Kirstie started out confidently enough on their home market, aiming £125,000 at a cupboard in London. But last week they were in Bolton with £60,000 for a family home. Driving a large Range Rover, Phil and Kirstie, as they followed their clients small saloon between addresses, looked like Special Branch detectives.

In **The Property Show** (ITV), shopkeepers' flats in Kilburn were being renovated and let to tenants, while people living near Fulham's football ground worried about the effect on lifestyle and property prices of the club's expansion plans.

All The Right Moves (BBC2) demonstrates both the best and worst of BBC2 in recent years. The drawback is a self-conscious laddism. This property show is one of the many vehicles spun-off *Top Gear* since Jeremy Clarkson forced the bottom out of the Levi's market but convinced the lager-drinking classes that the BBC's second television channel was not staid and arty.

Clarkson's lieutenant Quentin Willson is our host for this one and speaks the obligatory mockney: "If you're looking to trouser a substantial profit..." But one of the most obvious advantages of the BBC's freedom from commercials comes in consumer shows like this one. There is a cheekiness and journalistic rigour which ad-dependent channels can't match.

"I didn't know Legoland was a real country"

So, where *Location, Location, Location* tolerates the cost of featured properties as a fact of the market — and *The Property Show* seems to see it as an endorsement of London - *All The Right Moves* regularly launches tirades against neurotic or trend-driven pricing.

And, while the weakness of most holiday shows still is that the production team are nervous of biting the hand accommodating them, an estate agent series has the advantage that it is not being given anything free except a tour of the properties available to members of the public. So some houses shown can be trashed. The theme music from *Twin Peaks* was cheekily played over footage of a bizarre Buckinghamshire estate of sub-Scandanavian wooden lodges — built as second homes for the rich — where planning permission problems mean that no-one can live there during February.

There are three difficulties with all property shows. The first (shared with travel shows) is whether to be practical or aspirational. Research has shown that people who couldn't afford any of the holidays will watch resort shows for the travelogues. But will people unable to budget for a weekend home in France similarly enjoy looking round four very similar gites and contrasting the bathrooms?

The second obstacle is the one faced by all consumer shows except those which deal exclusively in complaints. Televising an item which someone wants to sell has the inevitable effect of advertising it. And, while the cost of a car or a holiday is hard to hike after it has featured on *Holiday* or *Top Gear*, the housing market is entirely status-driven. The houses in any area featured on *Location, Location, Location* or *The Property Show* will almost automatically go up, bringing yet more profit to estate agents.

The final limitation is that these removal van formats are inspired by the success of makeover shows. Given telly's canny ecology, it would be little surprise if one of the properties bought by an estate agent series subsequently has its decoration done by *Changing Places* and its garden turned over by *Ground Force* before being converted in to a 1900 residence for another series. But the makeover shows succeeded largely because of the possibility of cruelty and disappointment when things go wrong. These series are too positive, ending at the moment when people really believe they have their dream home.

All The Right Moves made the point that the housing market seems to be peaking. So estate agent telly is probably already an end-of-row genre. BBC2's is the best of them but you can't really imagine retro TV enthusiasts in 30 years renovating any of them while retaining the original features. There'll be no blue plaques on this street of tellyland.

Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

WHILE the Independent Television Commission (ITC) gives ITV planners a boost by suggesting it should be allowed to ditch its "public service" commitments and concentrate on delivering pap for the masses, the BBC has set about a new "strategy" of its own.

Imaginatively called "Back to Basics", it comprises yet another a "root and branch rethink" and is the brainchild of the new director of strategy, Caroline Fairburn, one of the Birtistas who cunningly survived Greg Dyke's so-called management cull.

It's not hard to find the point of this latest exercise. "It is a crucial time to strike new relationships and new partnerships with outside organisations," she explains in *Ariel*. The BBC needs to work with "outside organisations" and "external partners". "We need to ask what we are here for... what balance there should be between our commercial and public service activities".

Though BBC spokesmen carry on denying it, the commercialisation of at least part of the BBC looks to be very much on the agenda.

LORD Robertson of Islay, once plain George Robertson, the former UK defence secretary, is not the only well-known British personality to transfer to Nato.

The new secretary-general has been joined by Mark Laity, who used to report from Kosovo for the BBC. He is now press officer for Nato, prompting the more cynical hacks to comment: "No change there, then."

LIVEWATCH!

INTRODUCING a new series dedicated to those pointless moments when TV news "goes live" to a reporter who is at a place where nothing is happening or about to happen.

2 June: ITN is going heavy on the Dunkirk memorial story and at 12.30 it's live to Nicholas Owen, standing on top of a cliff at Dover. The little ships of course left hours ago and are "way out of sight". Owen reveals that "early this morning I was down there" on the now empty dockside behind him, watching the boats leave. Back to the studio.

ITN then goes live to another hack in Dunkirk. "When are we going to see the ships arrive?"

"About three hours' time," comes the reply..

JUST FANCY THAT!

"... an example of the very best in radio drama, coming up in 15 minutes. But first, *The Archers*..."

— Lunchtime continuity announcer, Radio 4, 29 May

IT'S GRIM UP NORTH LONDON

KNIFE & PACKER

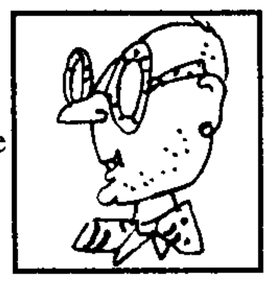
HOW IS HE? WILL HE PULL THROUGH?
I'M SORRY, MR PATERSON, BUT WE WARNED YOU THAT THIS OPERATION COULD GO WRONG
BUT IT'S SOOOO YOU, MR LOVIS
Salon Grique

AD NAUSEAM

WHEN the dot com nerds came piling into the faux-marble foyers of London's ad agencies, Soho's finest could hardly believe their luck. It was assumed – quite wrongly – that because the internet was a new thing, it must be a yoof thing.

Here was a whole new marketplace just gagging for award-winning campaigns full of oblique cultural nods and wacky "humour". The result? A raft of high profile "branding" that failed to explain, as if it was beneath them, what these fledgling companies actually did.

Doomed sports shop boo.com endowed its starry-eyed e-glitterati with a ludicrous marketing budget (part of a risible business plan) so they promptly trooped en masse to spend it at BMP DDB, an agency with a well-deserved reputation for solid research leading to original, effective advertising. Quite why BMP touched boo with a bargepole we shall never know – but at a guess the agency saw a chance to indulge in some fancy film-making. It was a gaffe that produced some of the duffest spots of recent years – berks in spandex running about inanely and then tripping up and falling on the pavement. The bright-young-thing clients lapped it up, though, making the now standard dot com error of confusing the message-less and banal for the clever-clever and ironic. No surprise boo went under a few weeks ago and BMP hasn't been paid.



But lessons appear not to have been learnt if the recent posters for Amazon clone Boxman.com are anything to go by. You would have thought the clever-clogs at Mother (the cooler-than-thou Clerkenwell agency chosen by Boxman) would be so well-versed in the finer points of irony they might have spotted the weakness in the mantra "What Boxman says, Boxman does". As someone has daubed at a bus stop: "What the fuck does Boxman do?" But who cares? The ads look just-so, with that pristine 70s album cover sheen and a man in a tuxedo with a cardboard box on his head taking popcorn from some old people. (Coo-ee! Bonkers!) Boxman can follow boo down the pan while Mother laughs all the way to an innovative art direction gold award, or something.

There are signs though that some companies are wising up. Lastminute.com hired M&C Saatchi to infect London with its particular brand of saccharine "be spontaneous" propaganda, and in spite (or perhaps because) of the company's woeful stockmarket performance, the simple message is the one that seems to have stuck, so the awareness indicators suggest.

Yet word is that the lastminuters have just about had it with the famous Saatchi way (if the client doesn't like our work, the client is thick). Again, the battle is over Saatchi's penchant for the trendily abstruse, whereas, chastened by high-profile failures around them, lastminute just wants to keep it simple.

The consumer meanwhile is worth barely a consideration. Two recent surveys show that most of the £150m spent on advertising by dot coms this year is going straight from the venture capitalists' pockets into the ad agencies' expense accounts. But the ads they produce – and who could forget buzz, travelstore, doobedoo, uprush, totaljobs, ebookers, breathe, codswallop (only the last one is made up) – are going straight over everyone's heads.

BIT OF A BOO-BOO

ROLL UP, roll up for "People and Profits in the New Economy", a one-day conference to be held at the Grosvenor House in London next Thursday under the chairmanship of Radio 4 pin-up James Naughtie.

Tickets may be a rather hefty £581 a head, but you'll certainly get your money's worth as you sit at the feet of the world's finest business leaders.

One of the main speakers is Anthony Coleman of boo.com, who will "take a look at the new world of business and discuss the way business is changing". Since the programme was printed he has learned a thing or two about changing businesses, and indeed "profits in the new economy": boo.com crashed spectacularly last month, with debts of £85m. Its liquidators, incidentally, are KPMG – who also happen to be organising the conference.

The other star turn will be a speech on "talent management": "How do you keep your best people?... Our speaker will talk about how he and his company have coped with the talent issue." And who better to speak on such a subject than our old friend Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill – who has "coped with the talent issue" quite brilliantly in recent months by sacking or driving out all the *Scotsman*'s most talented hacks?

ART ATTACK

YOUTH & Music, a body that actively encourages people aged between 14 and 30 to attend music and arts events, is likely to be forced to close by the end of this month – thanks to the Arts Council.

Though Youth & Music is a well-respected national organisation, the Arts Council refused its application for funds for a two-year internet project which would have enabled it to refocus its activities around a website.

The refusal is especially hypocritical given the recent speeches of culture secretary Chris Smith, most recently during ITV's awful Classical Music Awards, when he stressed the importance of encouraging the young to appreciate and get involved in classical music. Youth & Music's Stage Pass scheme did precisely that – yet the motley crew of new Labourites at the Arts Council effectively decided pull the plug on it.

Odd that the government and its cronies seem keener to support no-hope projects like the dome in a futile attempt to salvage credibility, than fund a popular organisation like Youth & Music. On second thoughts...

"(Sigh)... I suppose we'd best ask how their Mexican holiday went"

Pseuds Corner

To have seen Sartre, now virtually blind, entering the Closerie des Lilas, on Mme de Beauvoir's guardian arm, her turbaned head majestic and watchful, is to have witnessed one of those iconic moments when Europe is, *envers et contre tout*, still itself and at the very centre of the life of the mind.

GEORGE STEINER
Times Literary Supplement

Like a star being born, the Internet will suck all proximate matter into its dark vortex before exploding into a ball of fusion capable of illuminating cyberspace.

PriceWaterhouseCoopers brochure on "The future of the entertainment and media industries: 2005"

Kathryn William pokes at the treacle tart on her plate. "What I would have done," she explains with delightful gravity, "is grate some apple into it, and then not quite caramelised it, so that when you bit into it there would still be a crunch."

You immediately sense that Williams is definitely not the latest waif-with-guitar styled into oblivion by her record company.

DAVID PESCHECK
Telegraph Magazine

...any important relationship affects you profoundly and therefore affects other relationships. This is what my book [*Miss Chance*] is about, about a

grown-up relationship with a horse and the way the relationship affects and informs a raft of other relationships.

SIMON BARNES
The Times

[Francisco] Toledo always seems to appear out of nowhere, as if by magic. His presence is a mirage, fleeting, evanescent. Turn around and he is gone. Yet, at the same time, he inhabits the most tangible physical space of anyone I have ever met. Toledo, a friend says, is a man who fosters "variable truths and contradictions". You might tag him as shy and modest, but look at the photographs he has taken recently – his erect penis and testicles thrusting through the mottled skin of an iguana that he draped over his naked body.

Toledo's is the art of shamanism, in which people are transformed into beasts and animals may take on human characteristics. It is the art of the *nagual*, in which an animal is identified with a human, their fates intertwined. And it is the art of primal eroticism, in which an army of toads with human penises ejaculate in a joyous frenzy...

CHRISTOPHER GOODWIN
Guardian

Most of the people who send me thick sheaves of handwritten or word-processed doggerel appear never to have read any poetry, good or bad; neither do they listen to the cadences of speech, let alone register the intense mysteriousness of everyday communication. Though they write no language they are unable to resist self-dramatising clichés. The extent of their insensitivity may be gauged from their impertinence in sending such ropey effusions to a total stranger who has spent her whole life in the company of sublime poetry.

GERMAINE GREER
Independent on Sunday

CONTRIBUTORS: Graham Chainey, Geoff Margetts, Dr G.M. Ditchfield, Frank Clarke, 'Sir E. Gowers', C. Logue.

£10 paid for entries

Letters

Two-fingered salute

Sir,

Well done lads, you caught me red-handed! Within hours of winning a place on the Labour Party's NEC I attempted to discredit the running of the Labour Students election in order to advance the career of my daughter's ex-boyfriend. What a foul swine I am! Less assiduous journalists might have concluded that the story was a deliberate piece of spin fed to you to deflect attention from the fact that the NEC had made a complete fuck up of yet another electoral process. But you're too shrewd to be fooled. I salute you, oh fearless champions of democracy.

Yours faithfully,
TONY ROBINSON,

London NW1.

Brown-nosing

Sir,

Re: Oxford, Eye 1003, p5. Come off it! Surely you cannot believe your readers don't know a vested interest when they see one, especially from a public school Oxford type who happens to hold the top job at Private Eye?!

Gordon Brown was certainly on-target in his attack on Oxford (and Cambridge) elitism. However, the interesting thing is where he went wrong, in catching the media-borne disease of slavishly adhering to the notion that because Oxbridge is the oldest it is necessarily the best.

Cheers,
TIM HALL,

London SW15.

A northerner writes...

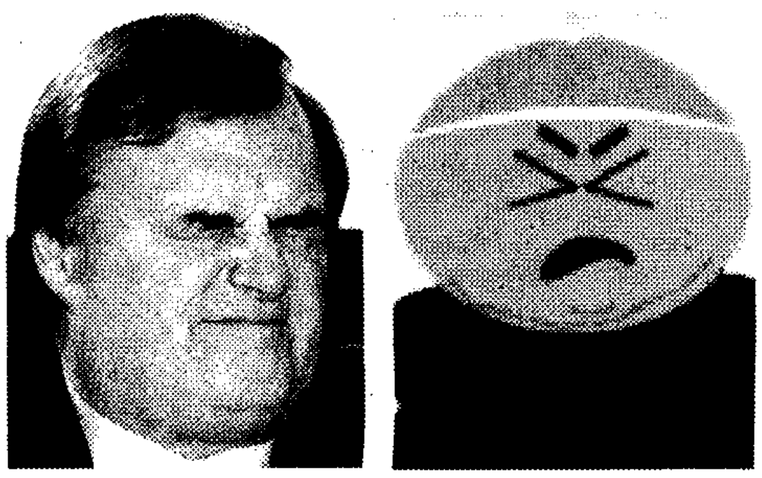
Sir,

The Vicar of St Albion's should check out the real source of the Working Men's Club notes, purportedly written by John Prescott (1003): I suspect that the author is actually a middle-class south eastern twit. The give-away is the writer's apparent unawareness that his attempt to mockingly imitate flat northern vowels will mystify most readers beyond Watford. Only a fooking sootherner with a ploomy acccent wouldn't realise that in whole chunks of the country, to use "oo" as a phonetic aid is to indicate that it's pronounced as in "soon" — consequently, I for one will be buggered if I ever heard anybody using a word even remotely sounding like "booger". Silly bagger!

Yours faithfully,
DON HOWE,

Liverpool.

Lookalike



Cartman **Prescott**

Sir,

Is John Prescott by any chance related to South Park's "Cartman"?

Yours faithfully,
STEVE CROWLEY,

Orpington, Kent.

Those UKIP letters in full...

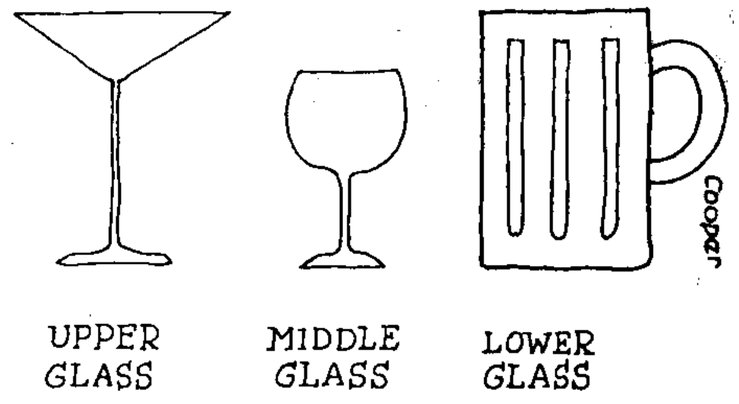
Sir,

Re: Reply to feature on "Focus on UKIP". I was appalled by your misrepresentation of my views (2 June) which I posted on a private internet forum hosted by individual members of the UK Independent Party. Yes, I am, as you accurately reported, together with, I believe, the majority of the people in Britain (of all ethnic backgrounds), wholly opposed to the self-serving and pernicious nature of political correctness. And yes, I believe, as does, in my view, the majority of the people in Britain, that much of political correctness is "nonsense". But to refer to a leader of another party as being "young and charismatic" or to argue that this party's policies are appealing to a sizeable section of the electorate, as the recent London elections demonstrated, hardly constitutes "a glowing tribute to the British National Party". It is no more supportive of the BNP than it would be to China's Communist Party to say that Mao Tse-tung was a charismatic leader. Neither is it supportive of the BNP to claim that, as a result of its performance in these elections, it is "undoubtedly set to grow". I am sure that the BNP's apparent resurgence during the London elections has not gone unnoticed in all political parties. My message, as it appeared in full on the aforementioned internet list, sought to highlight the dangers that the BNP poses; it was meant as nothing more than that. It gave detailed reasons for my conclusions that were in no way sympathetic towards the BNP. I am, by profession, a "political scientist" and as such it is my job to analyse political developments and the changing fortunes of political parties.

By quoting me out of context, the Private Eye article sought to give the impression that I was a BNP sympathiser. I categorically assert that I do not and have never harboured any sympathies towards the BNP.

Yours sincerely,
GREGORY SLYSZ,

London W3.



Er.... and another one...

Sir,

Thank you for a most interesting article entitled "Focus on UKIP".

There are certain slight tweaks here and there which you may consider would lead to a better educated or maybe bored readership, for example:

1. UKIP membership is rising, not falling, and we have 8,000 members. Six of the 15 signing the "we've had enough" letter you quote have asked to rejoin and have been rejected.

2. UKIP does not have a "bulletin board" nor any email gibberlines. The garbage you quote was on UKIPLIST which was owned by Simon Stoker who is not a member of our party.

3. The BNP have made no move to join UKIP. If they ever do, I will have great pleasure rejecting them and advising Private Eye.

4. Yes, I was on the National Executive of New Britain. Your article makes it plain that the constitution policies and monthly magazine of that party, which did not mention race in any way, were a total front. That Dennis Delderfield, who was at that time a member of the Synod of the Church of England, was working behind the scenes as a "veteran anti-black crusader" and not as we thought "an anti EU crusader".

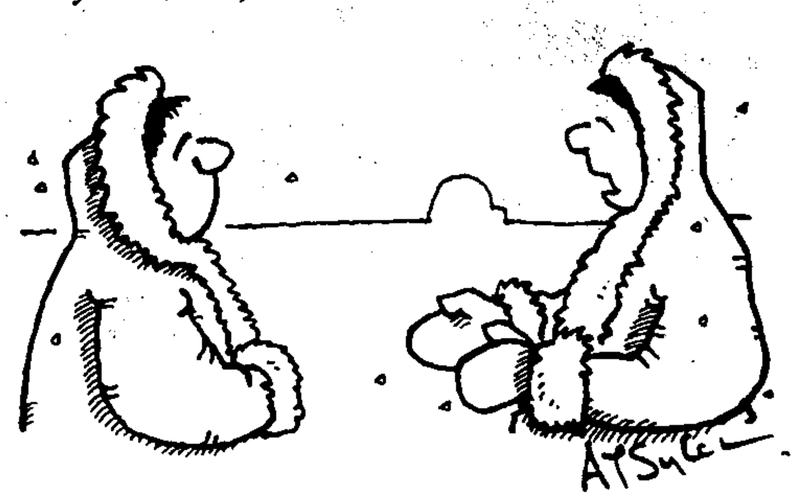
I wondered why there were screaming noises in the next room during our executive meetings. Dennis said it was an unoiled copying machine, he must have cleverly hidden the flogging pole.

5. I have a great many friends of Indian, Chinese, Afro Caribbean and Jewish background, as do my children. I am glad that they are able to laugh with me at your article.

Good luck and please speak to me next time in order that you can misquote me.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE NATTRASS,

Party Chairman, UKIP.



"Apparently, at the Groucho Club they have fifty different words for snow!"

...and yet another

Sir,

Your recent piece: "Focus in UKIP" dealt with our party's position on issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers. You quoted from private e-mails sent to each other by members of the U.K. Independence Party.

The paragraph in your piece referring to me claimed that I had said UKIP should "start a vigorous campaign against immigrants and asylum-seekers".

That was a deliberate and serious misrepresentation.

I print below the full, verbatim quotation on these matters I used in my e-mail of 8 May from which your writer purported to quote and sum up:

"UKIP stands in the British tradition of welcoming genuine refugees fleeing oppression — ie, those that meet our obligations under the UN charter to accommodate those with a `well-founded fear of persecution'. We don't believe we should admit others, however sympathetic we are to their circumstances. All genuine refugees and other asylum seekers should be accommodated in reception centres and their claims examined within weeks rather than up to 18 months as at present. Asylum seekers should have the right of appeal but again decisions should be made within weeks. According to the Government's own figures, 7 or 8 out of every 10 asylum-seekers are not genuine refugees."

I left the Labour party after 12 years to campaign in UKIP for the restoration of British independence from the EU. During that time I took a stand against all forms of racism and still do. On the one occasion when a letter from a UKIP member suggested he was expressing his views on immigration in a racist manner, I personally ensured that it was dealt with swiftly by our National Executive Committee. I am pleased to say he was asked to resign straightaway and did so. That is another indication of our party's clear stance on racism.

Yours sincerely,
TONY BENNET,

Political Assistant to Jeffrey Titford MEP (Leader of UKIP).

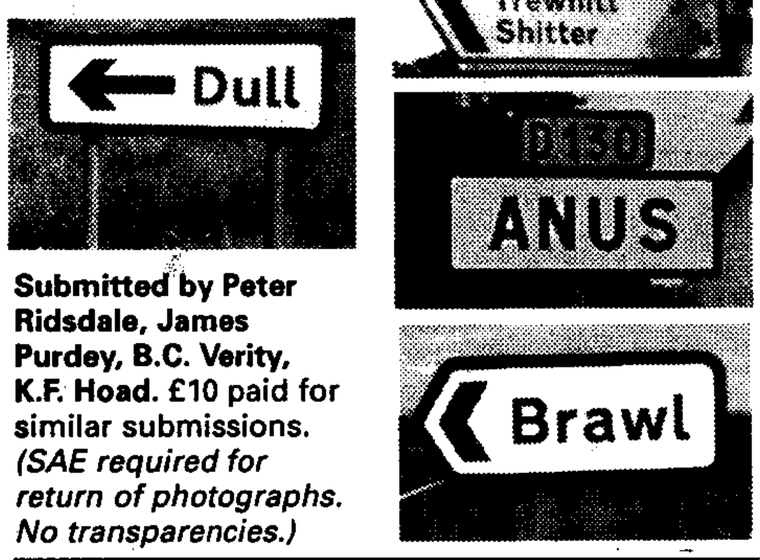
LUVVIES

"Tim [Robbins] organized a kind of tribal journey to this island and my girlfriends had been working on this ceremony. We sat around in a circle and they all talked in turn about qualities in me: someone would say, 'I've always been very moved by Susan as a mother,' or they focused on the activism, or the intellect. And then we got a bottle and everyone put in notes and we sealed it and everyone got naked and we threw it in the ocean."

SUSAN SARANDON
Evening Standard

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

I-SPY



Submitted by Peter Ridsdale, James Purdey, B.C. Verity, K.F. Hoad. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Inquest inquest

Sir,

Further to your report on the inquest into the death of Glenn Howard (Eye, 2 June) I should like to clarify the position. The Police Complaints Authority has not yet considered possible disciplinary action because we always await the outcome of the inquest, before considering disciplinary issues.

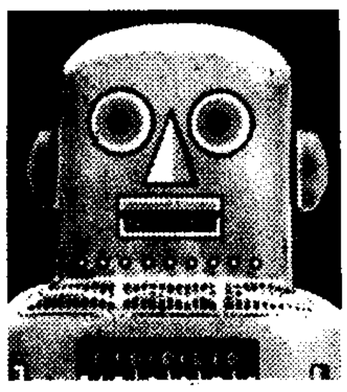
As the jury expressed concerns about how Mr Howard died, it has been agreed with the Metropolitan Police Service and the Crown Prosecution Service to produce an additional report. This will include a full transcript of the inquest and compare evidence given at the Coroner's court with the original documents. The CPS and this authority will consider the additional evidence before making our decisions.

It may take several months before the transcript can be obtained.

Yours faithfully,
MOLLY MEACHER,

Acting Chair, Police Complaints Authority.

Lookalike



Archbishop

Robot

Sir,

My friend's mother Mrs Wolfe found this robot reminds her of Dr George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Are they by any chance related?

Regards,
MIHO KITAGAWA,

London SW17.

Wednesday Prayer Group:
Tuesdays 7.00pm
Parish newsletter

Who else?

Sir,

In reply to Mike Dodd's e-mail (Eye 1003) — he is not alone, I also found Rory Bremner's comments on "La Nausee" rather witty. Is there something wrong with me too?

Yours,
LIV ROBINSON,

Via e-mail.

Over here and over looked?

Sir,

In all the recent celebration of the anniversary of the Dunkirk evacuation in 1940 I have wondered at the lack of reference to the crucial part played by the American navy in saving our men from a cruel fate. What is this strange and unaccustomed reticence on the part of our cousins? I think we should be told.

Kind regards,
ANDREW MAKIN,

Keighley.

Shorts shrift

Sir,

Regarding your hostile reception to the American interpretation of who cracked the enigma code, may I just remind you that if we Germans would whinge in self pity every time we are groundlessly made to look like complete arses, we would not have any time to run around in Lederhosen.

Heels clickingly,
L. MANSECK,

Addlestone, Surrey.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Anelka was travelling so fast that he couldn't keep his own feet."
CLIVE TYLDSLEY, ITV
(Anton Goodman)

"Cricket corruption is a rolling stone – it's gathering moss all the time."
OLIVER HOLT, Radio 5 Live
(Alan Cameron)

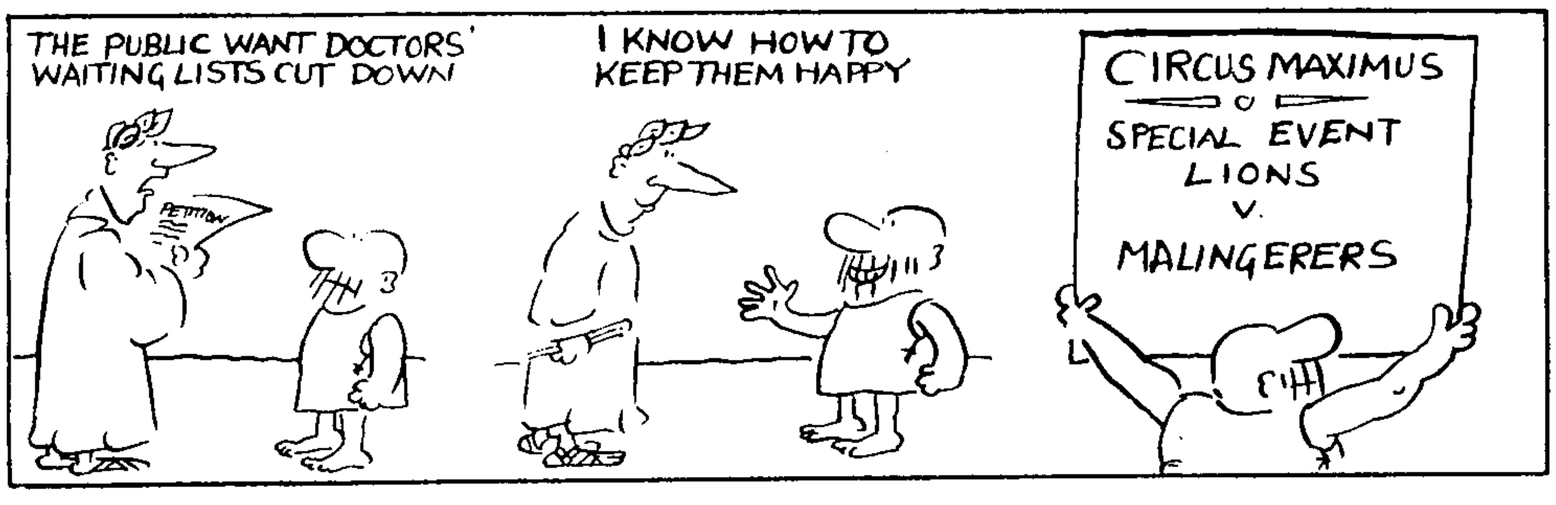
"I want more from David Beckham. I want him to improve on perfection."
KEVAN KEEGAN
(Rosemary Fong)

"...many people felt that the paparazzi behaved like leeches, or – worse – bloodsuckers."
JOHN WILSON, Radio 4
(Tim Hanrahan)

"Andy Flower is literally carrying the whole of the Zimbabwe team with the bat."
DAVE HOUGHTON, Sky Sports
(Warren Bamer)

HOM SAP

AUSTIN



Letter from **Brazil**
from Our Own Correspondent

"TODAY in Brazil we are acutely aware of the social injustices that make up part of our heritage of the last 500 years." So said Fernando Henrique Cardoso, our president, at the 500th anniversary celebrations a few weeks back in Porto Seguro, the town built on the site where Pedro Alvares Cabral first set foot on Brazilian soil.

Perhaps Mr Cardoso was not aware that only just down the road our swashbuckling military police – a hangover from the army dictatorship that held sway here for much of the 1960s, 70s and 80s – were busy beating up Amazonian Indians, the much marginalised indigenous inhabitants of our land, who have been suffering ever since the Europeans arrived, and other impoverished demonstrators. In an effort to distance themselves from allegations of an overly enthusiastic response to the perceived challenge to our special day, officers arrested 141 people for public order offences.

Oddly for a people known for their ability to party, the celebrations in the rest of the country were strangely muted, if they took place at all. Most Brazilians seemed happy to admit that there was simply nothing to celebrate and carried on with their daily chores. Indeed there has been precious little to inspire much national pride these last few months.

Carnival 2000 in Rio de Janeiro was marked by the appearance of 136 tonnes of dead fish floating on the famous Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas, the huge lake that lies at the heart of the city. On bad days, the lake looks as if it is actually boiling because so much gas bubbles up from the untreated shit being pumped into it. The last time the city's ancient sewerage system was overhauled was in 1961, and these measures were meant to last only until 1978.

CEDAE, the state water board, insists the problem is due to surrounding buildings illegally dumping their waste into the lake to cut costs. But after recent revelations that the company has invested almost nothing – just 2 percent of its annual budget – in maintenance and rehabilitation, no one believes a word of it. CEDAE's public image was further dented by photos of the clean-up operation that appeared in the papers – three men in a rowing boat with a tiny net and a bucket!

The political response resembled nothing so much like the tortured plots that drive our hugely popular but absurd TV soaps. Luis Paulo Condé, the mayor of Rio, was quick to blame Anthony "Little Boy" Garotinho, the state governor, for the disaster. "Little boy" in turn tried to accuse Condé. When that failed he resorted to blaming the fish themselves. Apparently they had bred too fast for their own good and used up all the oxygen from the lake, a pronouncement that prompted local hacks to joke that the mayor would soon be dishing out free condoms to the fish.

Meanwhile in São Paulo, our main industrial city, we are watching eagerly to see whether Celso Pitta, the mayor, will be impeached for corruption and stealing funds. His trouble began in March when Nicéa Pitta, his estranged and vengeful wife, appeared on TV to denounce him and several of his cronies. They stand accused of making deals with local companies to overcharge for work done and then creaming off up to 25 percent of government money, granted to the city's authorities to improve infrastructure. The mayor has been suspended and is battling for a third time to halt the legal process.

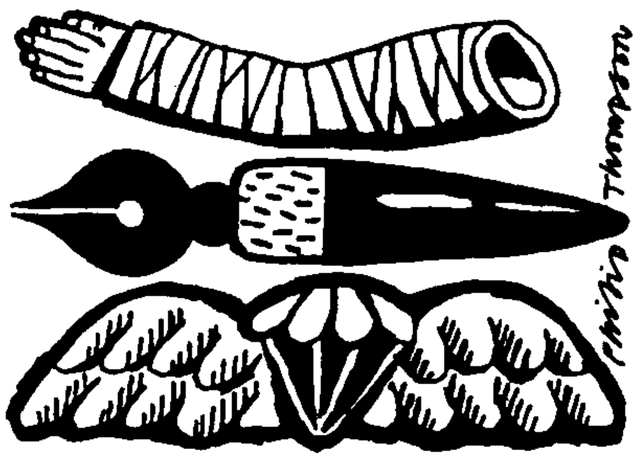
Also in time for our 500th birthday there have been the food-for-prisoners scandal, where lunches were sold for twice the retail price, and road repairs that need redoing every year... which are, of course, contracted to the same company! Worse still, no one seems ready to do much about this state of affairs in a country where too many people think it is clever to beat the system and no one believes there is a man in office who cannot be bought. We can only hope for better things as we pass the halfway mark to our own millennium, but there are precious few signs of change.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH

"The Army said I was airborne-qualified, and I wasn't going to question their decision," Jeff Lewis told reporters from his hospital bed in Fort Bragg. "I had a job to do, and I had to believe in what I was doing, so I sewed airborne wings onto my uniform, took my parachute, and jumped."

Due to an administrative error, Lewis (a supply clerk with the 82nd Airborne Division) had received orders to make a parachute jump, despite having received no training. "A good soldier doesn't



question, he just follows orders. The Army doesn't like complainers, so I decided to go with the flow. Apparently, my records show that I completed the Airborne School parachuting course at Fort Benning, but the only course I ever took there was in filing. I was a little nervous when the moment came to jump, but I just followed everyone else. I stepped out of the aircraft with the wrong foot, and my equipment got twisted up, which was kind of worrying. I eventually managed to get my canopy open, but I didn't know how to land, and I broke both arms, an ankle, dislocated my right shoulder, fractured my elbow and skull, and am still suffering from mild concussion. When the platoon sergeant came to visit me here in hospital, I decided to explain the situation to him, but I didn't complain. No Sir." *(The Sentinel [North Carolina], 20/5/00. Spotter: Chris Haskett)*

— ● —

● *"I first started to notice a correlation between my bowel movements and wind direction while living at St Michaels Road," Penelope Sowter told reporters at her house in Bedford. "Whenever the wind blows from the direction of Norse Road crematorium, I suffer from slack green bowel movements. To my mind, this is due to the fumes given off by mercury fillings in the dead people's teeth. People react to mercury vapour emissions differently, depending on their sensitivity. To my mind, the chimneys should have filters fitted, and all filled teeth should be removed before cremation. My condition is not psychosomatic, to my mind, because I came down with a single bout of diarrhoea after spending the day at Mander College on Tuesday."*

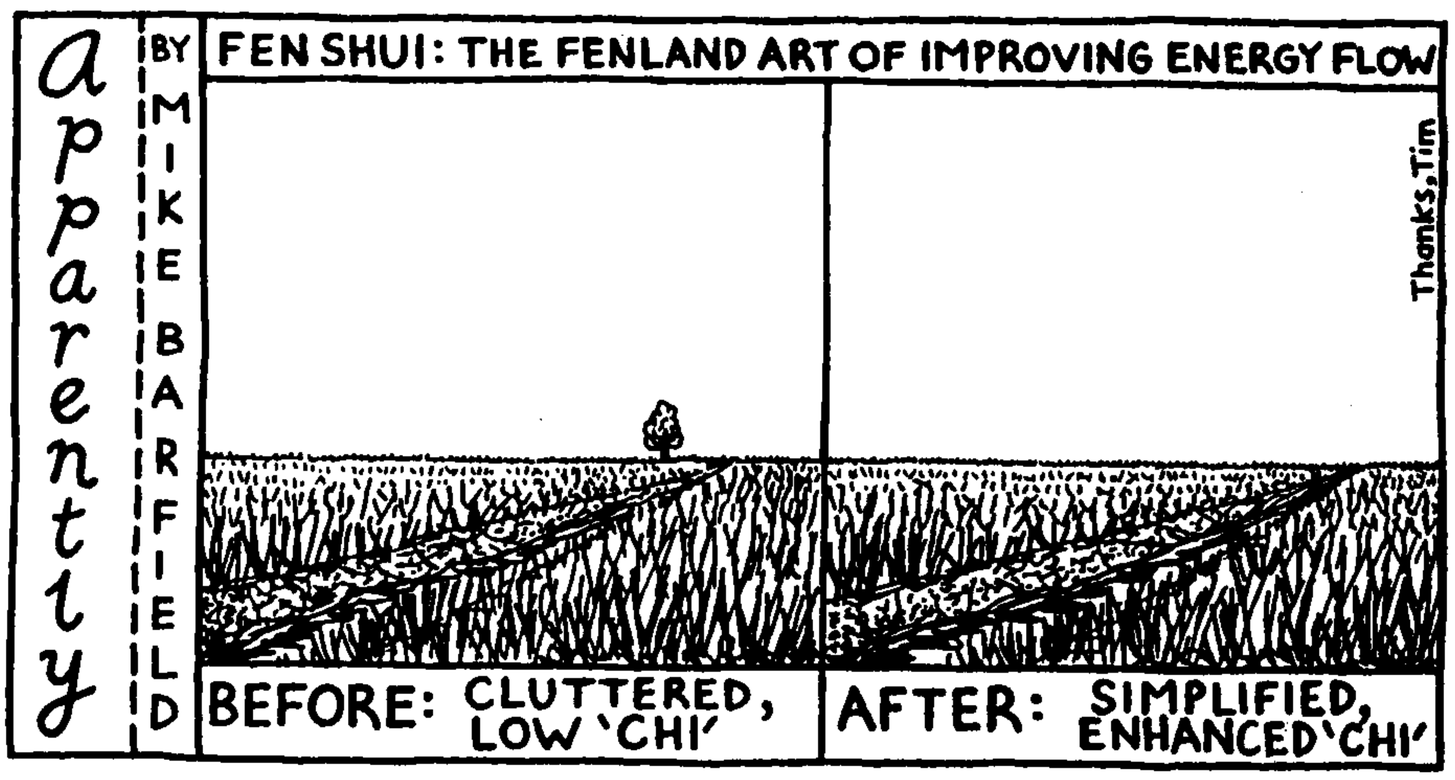
But Norse Road Crematorium registrar Michael Day insisted that "there are no fumes from our chimney stack. Furthermore, removing fillings from the bodies would be undignified, and I think someone who has an elderly mother who has managed to keep her own teeth would feel the same way." (Bedfordshire on Sunday, 14/5/00. Spotter: Mark Edwards)

— ● —

● "Thanks to liberal laws and generous tax breaks, Japan has more than 220,000 registered religious groups. Although few are licensed as medical practitioners, many of these sects offer spiritual cures for physical and mental problems.

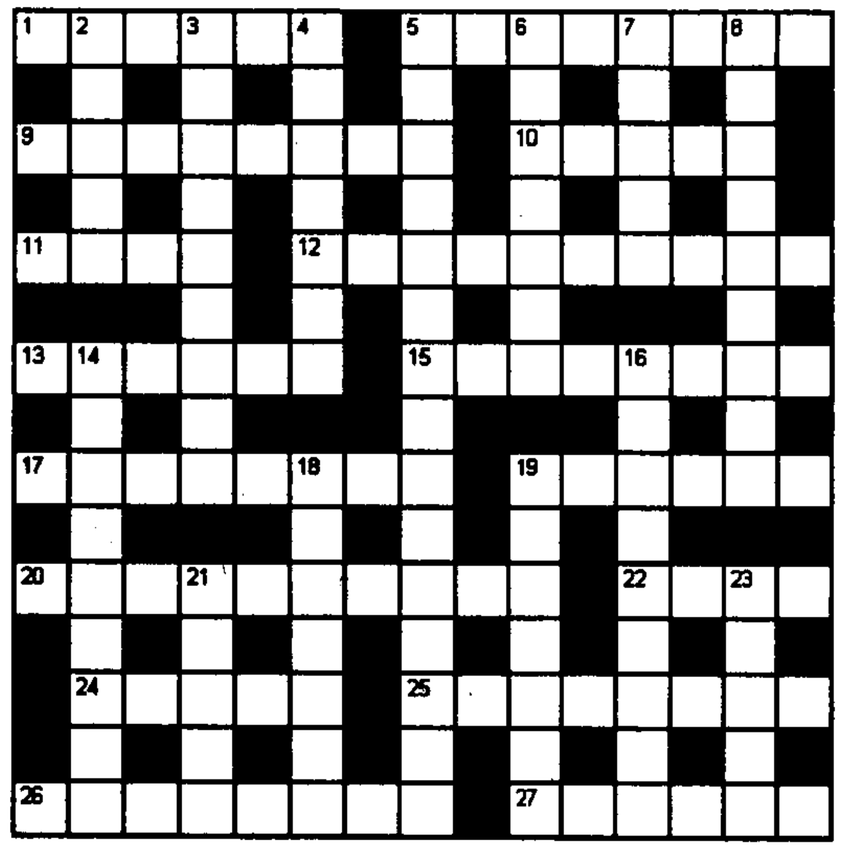
"The highest profile case came to a conclusion on May 10 with the arrest of the guru and 12 acolytes of the Ho-no-Hana Sanpogyo cult on charges of fraud. Hogen Fukunaga, the self-proclaimed 'envoy of heaven' and reincarnation of Buddha and Jesus Christ, claimed to be able to diagnose health problems and predict the future by examining the soles of people's feet. After about 10 minutes of stroking and scrutinising, Fukunaga and other leading cultists would diagnose cancer, AIDS, an imminent suicide, impending debt, or a failure to find a partner, all based on the warmth of the foot, the colour of the veins, or blemishes on the toes. The results usually struck a chord with the followers, which is somewhat unsurprising given that they were asked to provide details of all their health and emotional problems before each reading. Victims of the scam were then told that they would die unless they purchased expensive religious scrolls or a pinch of Buddha's ashes for $180,000. Since the founding of Ho-no-Hana in 1987, Fukunaga and his followers are believed to have deceived more than 22,000 people with this ruse, earning themselves about $750 million.

"The dangers of cult practices were underscored late last year, when police investigated a hotel room in Narita where they found a decomposing male corpse and several members of the Life Space sect. The cult's guru Koji Takahashi said he had cured the man of a brain haemorrhage with a special treatment called Shakty Pat — a series of slaps to the head. Although the corpse had been decomposing for months, cultists said the change of colour and strange smell were a sure sign that it was alive." *(The Lancet, 20/5/00. Spotter: Tom Bloomfield)*



EYE CROSSWORD 159

by Cyclops — £100 prize



ACROSS

1 Pants and takes the line of least resistance (6)
5 Leading film villain like Dolly Parton? (3-5)
9 Rib about dozy, ill-conceived Dome feature (4,4)
10 Pop group enough to turn one to drink? (5)
11 Reported fit though he was relatively wiped out (4)
12 Supposed guardians of the peace sticking one in balls, flower – lousy things! (4,6)
13 It helps some people come out with ideas about cross (3,3)
15 Get lost, stupid Open University! (5,3)
17 As indulged in by Fitzgerald having it off and invading Cook's preserve? (8)
19 They're produced by suspenders of French sexual conquests (6)
20 As one adored by retailers, Posh sadly takes a break with Chip (10)
22 Dewar's effectively hiding his real mouthpiece? (4)
24 Consumer's popular in bloody back (5)
25 American people cause pop star who's getting on all right to take amphetamines (8)
26 In which it's hard to choose the features of *Split Personalities* (3,5)
27 To be a father without, note, Tony's capital produces irony (6)

DOWN

2 Heroin: flop as a great leveller (1-4)
3 Delivery system describing Prince Charles to an audience (5,4)
4 What Brillo Pad did: cursed pitifully about sod all (7)
5 Outstandingly good article on boxer possibly over the head of Sun-reader, tosh (3,4,8)
6 Hookers, given salesman's erection, do very well (7)
7 Frame, with no difficulty, Latvia's premier (5)
8 Hospital cut that will result in an unproductive future (9)
14 A magnificent organ on dog – it's for cosmetic purposes (3-6)
16 Bush rambling about Kabul to Western Alliance initially (9)
18 It's capital here, rudely interrupting Brown (7)
19 Fergie, large figure, socially acceptable on the game (7)
21 Lofty operator responsible for Blair being without one-to-one (5)
23 Small organ but streak (5)

£100 prize to first solution opened on 23.6.00. Entries to 'Crossword', Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 158

Winner: ROD GRIFFIN

ACROSS: 1 Local elections 9 Ill-bred 10 Ugly mug 11 Debag 12 In-patient 13 Stooge 15 Teapots 18 The Beeb 20 Bribes 22 Sceptical 24 Tonga 26 Obadiah 27 Watford 28 Gerrymandering.

DOWN: 1 Lairds 2 Celeb 3 Lord Gnome 4 Luddite 5 Crumpet 6 Islet 7 Number one 8 Egotism 14 The Senate 16 Aristotle 17 Atishoo 19 Beckham 20 Baldwin 21 Lapdog 23 Trier 25 Naomi.

MILLENNIUM BLAIR 'WOBBLES'

by Our London Staff
Paul Footbridge

THE NEWLY opened Millennium Blair, which aimed to bring together the North and South of the country, has developed a dangerous "wobble" according to its designer, Philip Gould.

Millions of people responded to the idea of the Blair with enormous enthusiasm and thronged in large crowds to get on it.

But when they finally reached the Blair they found themselves swaying around dangerously with every breath of wind.

Blair of Light

Said one disappointed Blair walker, "I lost my balance and had no idea where I was going. The Blair was swinging first to the left and then to the right. After a while I felt sick and had to go home."

The multi-million-pound Blair has now been temporarily closed pending an enquiry. Said architect Sir Alastair Campbell, "After the excitement of the fireworks surrounding its opening it was bound to be a bit of a disappointment. But there is nothing fundamentally wrong with it. After all, the Blair was designed for quite a bit of movement."

ON OTHER PAGES

Is Leo to blame?

GLENDA SLAGG

The One-Man Women's Institute!

FLOWERY hats off to the plucky ladies of the WI who gave Tony Blair the shock of his life when he stood in front of them a-braggin' and a-blaggin'!?!?! Hip hip hooray for the ladies of Middle England for wipin' the smug smile off beaming Blair's kisser!?!?! All together now – Boo! Geddoff! Shuddup! Bring on Gyles Brandreth!!

THE WI? Don't they make you sick – and it's not just their mouldy old jam and parsnip chutney I'm talkin' about!!!? The Prime Minister takes time off from looking after lovely little Leo to offer a few words of wisdom – and how do they *welcome him*??!!?

By a-jeerin' and a-sneerin' – that's how!!!!

What happened to good manners and respect I want to know??!?!

Call yourself ladies??!?! You lot make *soccer hooligans* look like saints!!?!

Get back to your crummy cakes and your half-baked biscuits you boot-faced old bags!!?

All together now!!? Boo!!! Geddoff??? Shuddup!!! Bring on Tony Blair 'n' little Leo!!?!

SEEN that photograph of Vanessa Fatz (sorry "Sveltz") squeezin' herself into a skimpy one-piece swimsuit??!?! Now I've seen it all – and I wish I hadn't??!!

SO, John Humphrys is a Dad at 56?? Who cares??!?! Not me mister. No, don't interrupt me, John, I'm going to have my say (Geddit??!?!) We don't want to hear about little Owen thank you very much. Let's get on with the traffic and the weather. Geddit??!?!?!

HATS off to John Humphreys!! The BBC's Battling Bonker. He may be old and rude, but he's still got lead in his pencil!!?!?! It's not just politicians he gives a hard time to (Geddit??!?!) And now Glenda's Thought For The Day. Men!!! Mmmmm!!!

SO, HERE they are — Glenda's Euro 2000 Scorers:

TOM JONES: He's sixty and sexty!!?! I take my knickers off to you anytime, boyo!?!?!

LORD NORMAN FOSTER: I'm just like his bridge – I go all wobbly ever time he walks over me!?!?!

LORD FREDDIE WINDSOR: OK, so he's drunk and lying on the stairs senseless!!! That's the way I like my guys!??!?

Byeeeeee!!!!!!

Mugabe (mu'ga:bɪ) *n* **Robert.** born 1925, Zimbabwean politician; leader of one wing of the Patriotic Front against the government of Ian Smith of Rhodesia, and of the Zanu party; prime minister (1980–87); president from 1988.
mugger[1] ('mʌgə) *n* **1** *Informal.* a person who commits robbery with violence, esp. in the street. **2** *Chiefly U.S. and Canadian.* a person who overacts.

Oxford English Dictionary

The Guardian's Cut-Out-and-Keep Guide To The Girls That Prince William Is Most Likely To Bonk

(Surely 'Guide To The Tragic Situation In Sierra Leone'? Ex-Ed.)

The Honourable Laetita Witherington-Montefiore-Strobes, 18. Eldest daughter of Lord and Lady Brideshead-Starborgling. Laetitia recently saw a photograph of the Prince in *Country Life*, which she cut out and pinned up in her bedroom next to a picture of her pony, Flapjack.

Tarara Boomdeay-Palmer-Cokehead, 27. Fun-loving partygoer and daughter of Brigadier Peter de la Boomdeay, Commander of His Excellency's Land Forces, Oman, Tarara met the Prince at the popular Slappers' Nightclub in Cheltenham at a fund-raising evening in aid of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP).

Baroness Jay, 75. Although slightly older than William, the sexy leader of the House of Lords is known to be a good-time girl who likes clubbing, skiing and constitutional reform.

Julie Burchill, 53. Although they have never met, the self-styled Queen of the Groucho has all the attributes to become a modern Queen of England. She is a self-confessed drug addict, lesbian and writer for the Guardian (See the Hon. Polly Toynbee, 271).

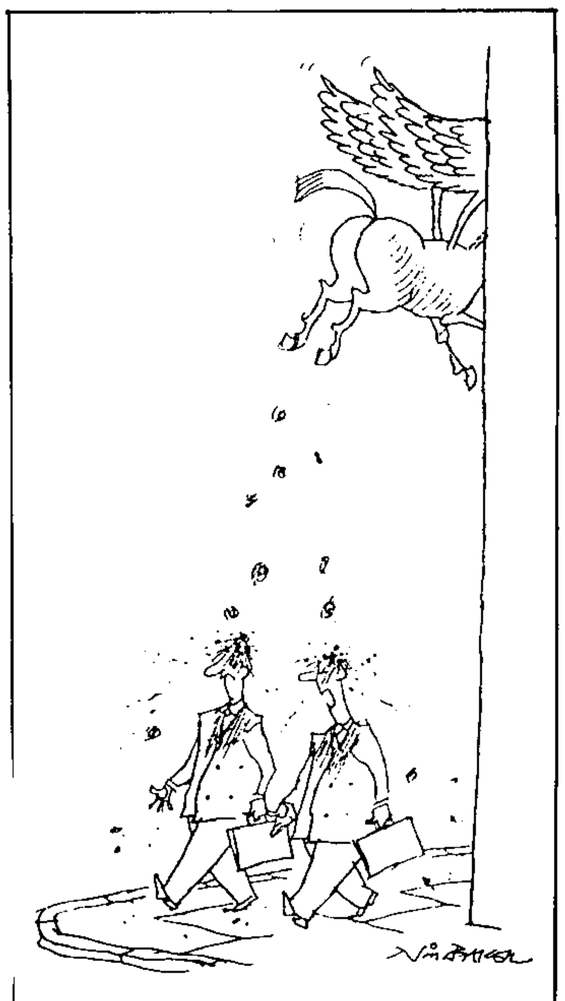
Alan Rusbridger, 21. Handsome, bespectacled Harry Potter lookalike, would make a perfect companion for the young and impressionable future King of England. Like William, Alan is known to be keen on the internet and has his own website: rubbish@grauniad.zzzz

SALLY JOCKSTRAP'S EURO 2000 DIARY

Sunday
I arrive in Copenhagen. There is no atmosphere at all for the opening match of England vs. the West Indies. But the good news is that Frankie Dettori looks fit to tee off for Australia.

Monday
I arrive in Buenos Aires where Euro 2000 fever has not yet caught on. But never mind, England's skiers are looking good for a place in the prestigious American Masters in Troon.

Tuesday
Henley and the atmosphere is electric for the first test between the Harlequins and favourites The Chicago Bears. My money is on Pete Sampras riding Coulthard. *(That's enough diary. Ed.)*



"Mind you, the gardens need it"

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

An Angry Message From the Editor Mr Alastair Campbell

I am disgusted, as I am sure all right-thinking decent parishioners are, by the discourteous and unforgiveable treatment meted out to the Vicar by the so-called ladies of St Albion's WI last week.

The Vicar, having just returned from his paternity leave, had generously asked if he could address the meeting, only to be greeted with cat-calls, slow hand-claps and jeering. This behaviour was a disgrace. There is no excuse for such rudeness, above all to the Vicar, who has done so much for all these ladies in the church hall.

Obviously, the Vicar is sorry he could not get his message across about the importance of Damson Jam and Lemon Drizzle Cake in today's parish. In fact, he had spent weeks if not minutes preparing his remarks.

And he is sorry that the audience decided not to listen to his uncontentious recipe for Meat Loaf Salad.

In a spirit of Christian forgiveness, the Vicar has decided to close down the Women's Institute forthwith and to ban the following ladies from the Flower Rota for life: Mrs E. Titmarsh, Mrs J. Bulstrode, Mrs C. Bradford-Ffrench, Lady Custard (Ms), Mrs S. Dalrymple, Fran Wittgenstein-Himmler, Mrs Chapatti, the late Dame Witherington-Bakewell, and many others too numerous to mention here. There will be a full list of names and addresses posted at the back of the church. Please check to see if you are

one of the rude ladies who ruined the Vicar's first day back.

Here is the speech (written by the Vicar himself) that you would have heard if it had not been for the disruptive minority of women who formed the majority of the audience.

Hello Ladies,

Nice to see you all in your lovely summer dresses and hats. Let's hope you keep them on. *(Pause for laughter.)* But seriously I know how busy you good ladies are with your jam-making and collecting clothes for the jumble sale, so it's very good of you to allow me to tell you how well everything is going in the parish as a result of my hard work. *(Pause for applause.)*

And Leo says hello. *(Pause for cries of "Aaah!".)*

But I came here with a message and what I want you all to take forward in your lives is simply this: let's not abandon all those traditional values which have made St Albion's what it is today. *(Look serious.)*

It's all very easy to mock those values, in the scramble to be new and modern. But, let's face it, you don't want to throw out the baby with the bathwater (a lesson I've been trying to teach the nanny over the past fortnight!). *(Pause for more laughter.)*

I think of all those good people sitting in the middle of the church - solid, dependable, respectable people, with their families, their sense of decency and their respect for law and order.

People like our good friend Mr Dacre, who coincidentally edits one of our most popular local papers, the St Albion's Mail. And people like you!!

Heaven forbid that we should offend good, honest folk, who could easily drift away from the church if they sense that, say, the sillier views about "class" expressed by Mr Brown or Mr Prescott carried any weight with the Vicar. But they don't! *(Bang fist on lectern.)*

So let's start a real crusade for the commonsense values of yesteryear! *(Acknowledge cheers.)*

Let us root out the forces of modernism wherever we find them!

As it says in the Book of Oddbin, "You should not pour new wine into old bottles. It's old wine you want, every time." And old ladies too!

God bless you and Good Afternoon!

(Standing Ovation.)

DO YOU KNOW ANY OF THESE WOMEN? IF SO, THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU. ANSWERS WILL BE TREATED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE. RING ST ALBION'S 73742723.

Recipe Of The Week

Here's a recipe from a really sensible working woman who hasn't got time to cook (or to sit around being rude to important speakers)

Cherie's Cherry Pie

- Put Sainsbury's GM-Free Cherry Pie in microwave.
- Set dial for 3 minutes at power ten.
- Ping! Pie's nice and ever so hot! *(Serves 2)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

● The hymn "Jerusalem" will be removed from the Hymn Book – Hymns Modern and New (1999).

● The visiting lay preacher Mr Gyles Brandreth will not be welcome at any parish event until further notice.

● The Vicar will be back to write his normal letter next week – *if* everyone behaves. A.C.

Parish Postbag

Dear Sir,

Hats off to Gordon Brown for blowing the gaffe on all t'poncy boogers with their fancy ways and hoity-toity Oxbridge degrees pontificating in lahdidah voices about

Yours sincerely,
J. Prescott,
Working Men's Stately Home,
Dorneywood,
Bucks.

PS. I have told the butler to deliver this by hand, and sent him round in the spare Jag.

To Remember In Your Prayers

Mrs Jay, the matron of the St Albion's Old People's Home, who has unfortunately been caught out telling lies about where she went to school. Help her to understand that it is not clever or helpful to pretend that you have been to the local Grammar School, when in fact you went to the St Albion's High School For Young Ladies (fees £5000 a term), and that this kind of thing reflects very badly on the person who was brave enough to give her the job when there were not a few people who said that, frankly, she wasn't up to it! T.B.

Apologies

The Vicar has apologised to the following people this week on your behalf for their terrible treatment at the hands of society:

The Guildford Four
The Jackson Five
The Birmingham Six
Blake's 7

NOTICE

The vicar would like it to be known that the traditional 3 piece suit is no longer compulsory for male worshippers at Sunday Service.

Parishioners should feel free to dress down and wear what they feel comfortable in.

Suggested outfit

1. Denim
2. Stone-washed Chinos (beige or camel – your choice)
3. Deck shoes
4. No socks
5. Baby on arm!

Millennium Tent Update

from Jean-Claude Gerbil

Bonjour, mes amis! Et cette semaine, good news! Comme vous will remember, last week nous avons revisés le target pour le numéro de visiteurs à la Grande Tente. Voici un petit chart pour illustrer notre succès énorme!

Target Visiteurs	Actuel Visiteurs
0	0

Eh voila! Nous avons achieved le target! Pas mal, n'est-ce pas? Merci pour votre support. Et souvenez, la tente est ouverte tous les jours (et les nuits), admission absolument libre pour tous les personnes aged entre 0 et 100.

J-Y Gerbil
Grand Supremo de la Tente

CRIKEY! I FAILED!

by **Boris 'Beano' Johnson**
Editor of the SpectacularlyUnsuccessful-AtGettingSelectedForHeseltine'sSeat

LUMMEE! I thought it was in the bag! There's me, old school tie, silly voice and pair of trusty plus fours – what could be more likely to endear me to the good citizens of Henley-on-Thames?

And, to cap it all, I'd even been to Henley once, taking some totty to the Regatta and getting stinkoed in the Leander Club marquee with a lot of decent red-faced coves in pink blazers.

"What is your view on the Euro?" came the question from some old battle-axe in a flowery hat.

Oo-er! Cripes! I should have done my prep! Yaroo! I'd been rumbled *(continued p. 94)*

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam President Hafez Al-Assad of Syria

So. Farewell
Then
President Assad.

Ruthless Dictator
And Mass Murderer.

We are not As
Sad as the people
Who were crying on
The television.

Quite the opposite
In fact.

E.J. Thribb (17½)
whose new collection of political verse "Write and Left" is published on the internet.

● *Robert McCummy writes:* Thribb is one of the most exciting voices in contemporary anglophone Commonwealth writing and alongside Salman Rushdie ranks as *(continued p. 94)*

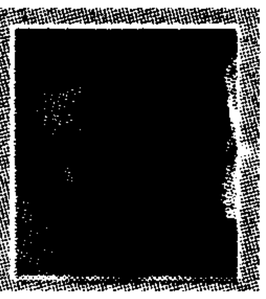
SUPERMODELS

KERBER

THE Sun

Friday, June 16, 2000 30p THE PEOPLE'S PAPER

GARY GLITTER SUPPORTS EURO – FULL STORY P.3



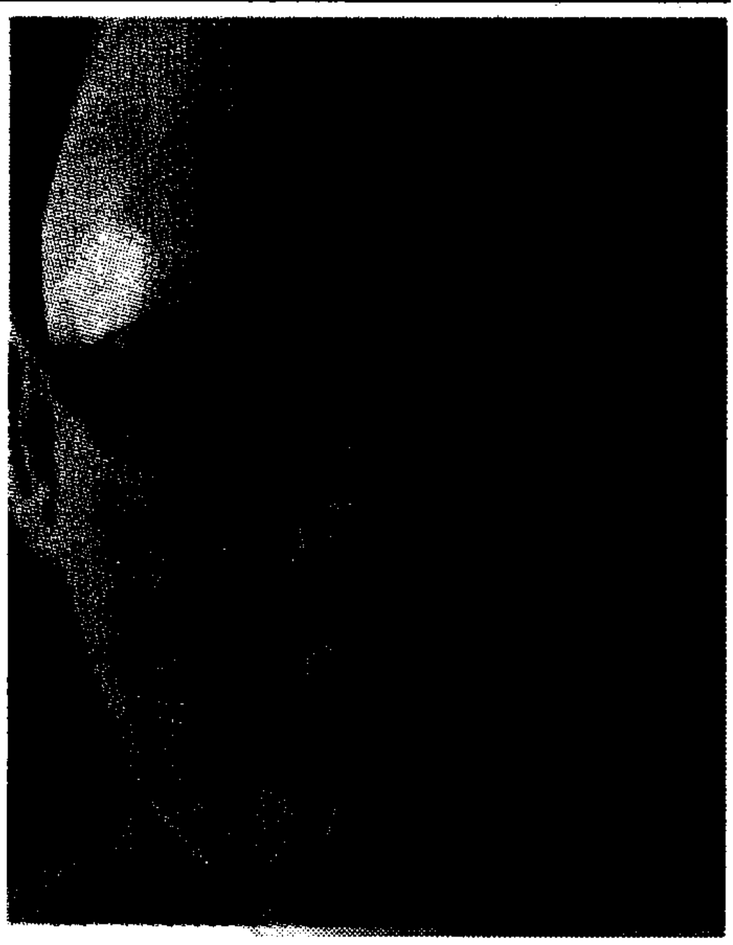
A fat, bald, evil pervert in paradise

by GARY GLITTER

LANGUISHING in his palatial penthouse office, shamed editor David Yelland thinks himself beyond the reach of the lives ruined by his repulsive obsession with young topless women.

Once lured to Canary Wharf these young women have semi-naked photos taken of them which are then down-loaded for publication in his adult pamphlet or, as he likes to describe it, his "newspaper".

Should this monster be allowed to enjoy his jet-set, champagne-quaffing lifestyle at the expense of these girls? WE THINK NOT!



A Top Gynaecologist writes

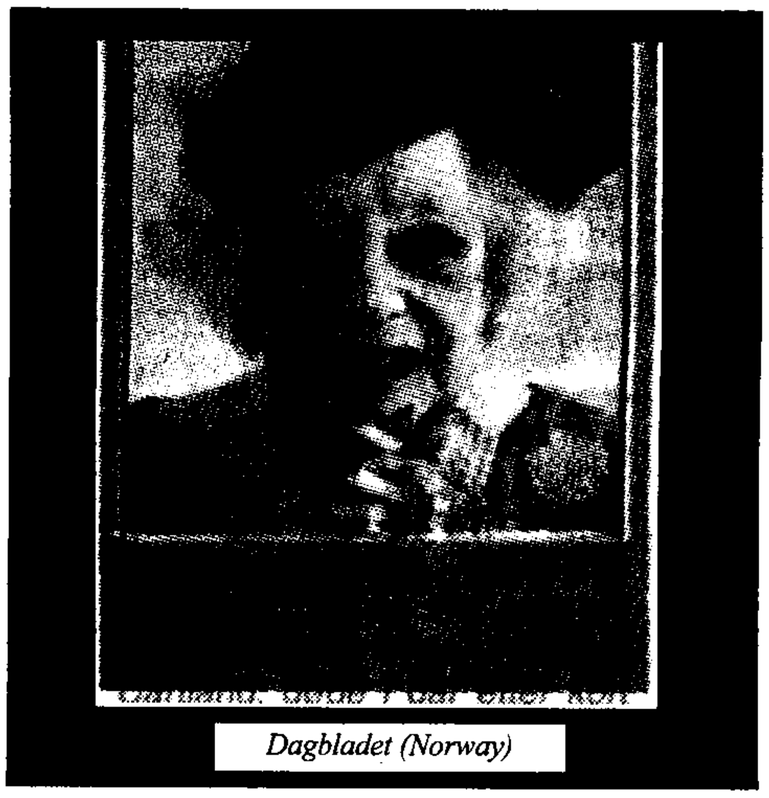
AS A Doctor, I am often asked: "Why were you struck off?"

It's easy for patients to get over-anxious about minor complaints, and the simple answer to their worries is:

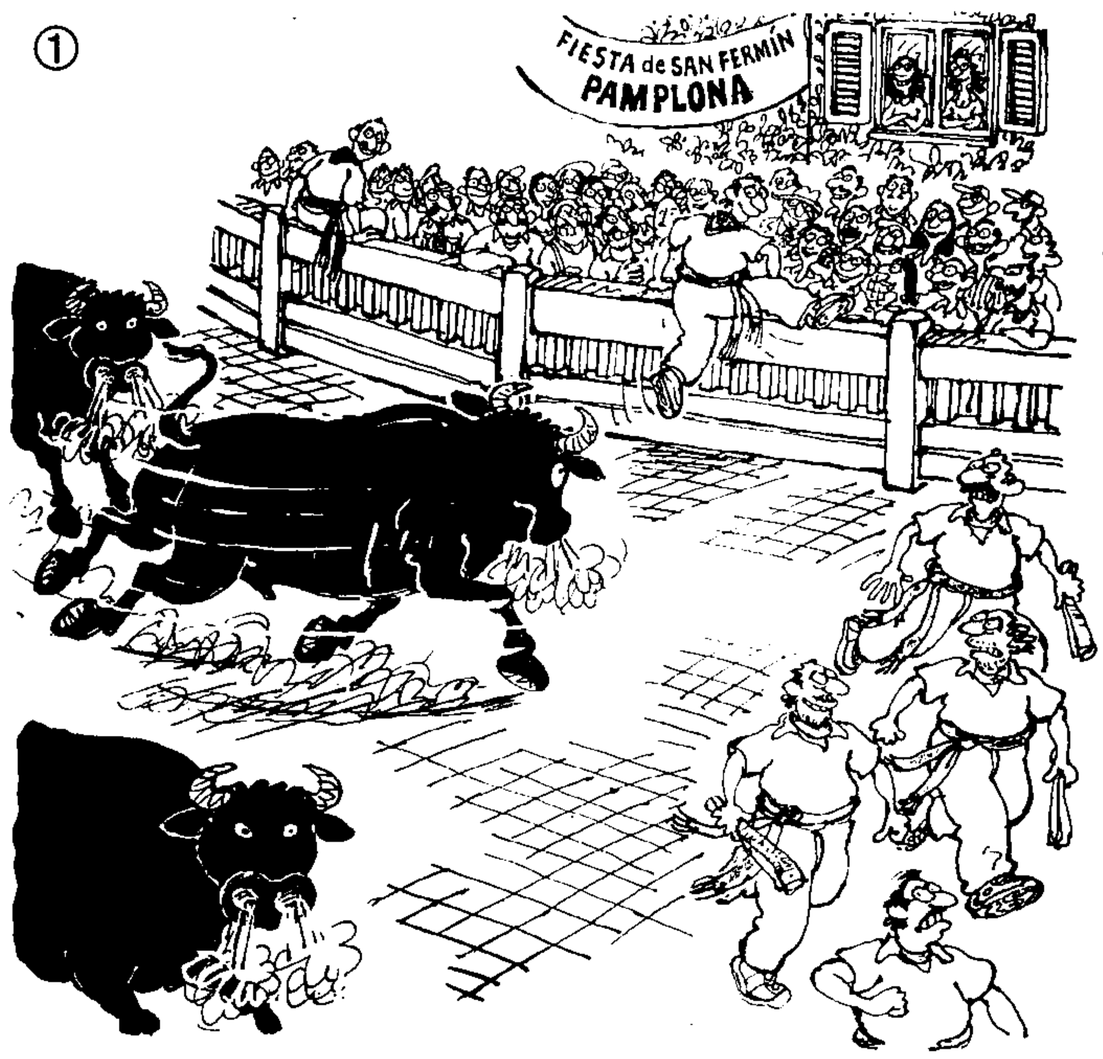
"I am exceedingly good at my job — probably the best in my field. That is why I am now a highly respected shop assistant in Boots, hiding under the assumed name of Dr O'Piss-Poor."

If you are concerned about your gynaecologist — tough.

© A. Doctor



Dagbladet (Norway)



THE BIG DEBATE

SHOULD EDITORS TAKE BURCHILL?

Burchill: Gets up your nose

YES says Alan Rubbisher.

THE hysteria about the alleged dangers of taking Burchill have disguised the basic truth – taking Burchill is harmless fun. You just read a line and suddenly the whole world goes fuzzy. Words lose their meaning, nothing is important any more and you find yourself saying "This is terrific shit" OK, so Burchill's expensive (with a Fleet Street value of ten thousand pounds a word), but hey you only live once and if you're surrounded by boring articles like I am at the Guardian, then Burchill seems like a good idea.

NO says everybody else.

TV Highlights

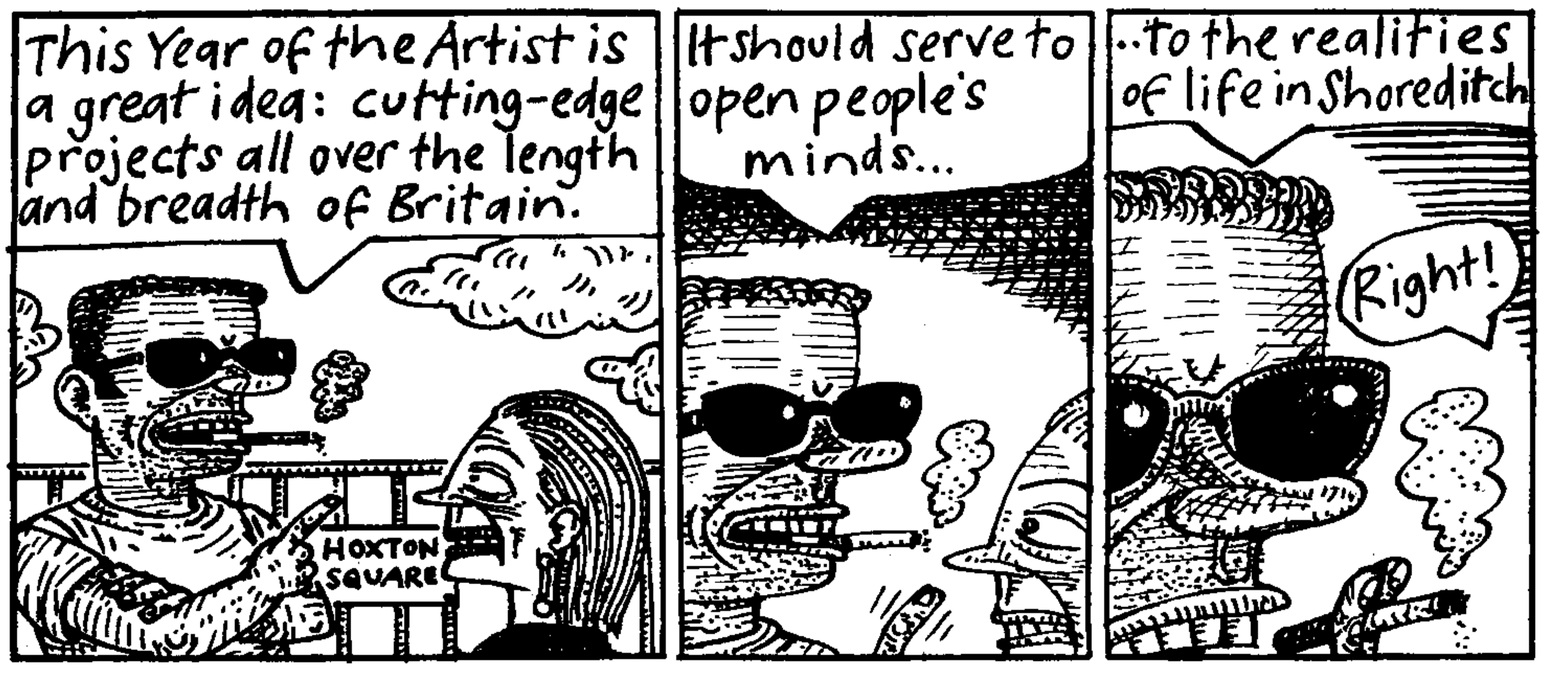
Channel 4 9.30pm

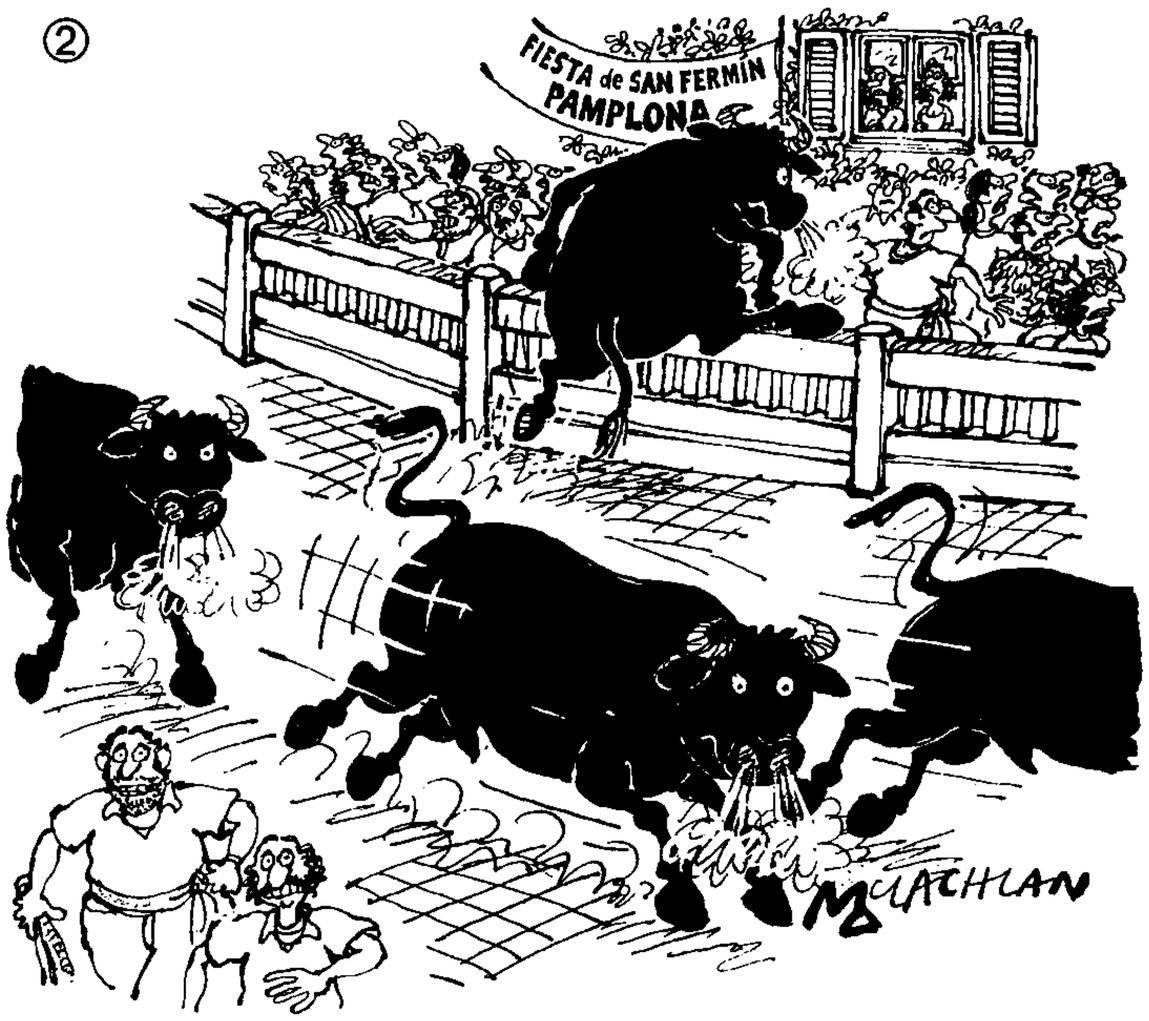
Lock Stock and Two Scraping Barrels

Hard-to-follow shaggy dog story sees four cheeky chappie wide-boy producers fool Channel 4 into thinking they're buying a hit TV franchise whereas, in fact, they're being lumbered with a load of right dodgy gear.

Eye rating: *Pony and Trap*

YOUNG BRITISH ARTISTS BY BIRCH


This Year of the Artist is a great idea: cutting-edge projects all over the length and breadth of Britain.
HOXTON SQUARE
It should serve to open people's minds...
..to the realities of life in Shoreditch
Right!



HAGUE PROMISES MILLIONS TO PENSIONERS

by Our Political Staff **Quentin Lettsbuyanotherpaperinstead**

A MILLION-POUND windfall for every pensioner in Britain — that was William Hague's astonishing pledge to win back the Grey vote.

The Tory leader gave a solemn undertaking that as soon as a Conservative government is elected then every pensioner in the country will receive a one-off tax-free payment of one million pounds in cash.

Said Hague: "Of course we will never be elected, so this is a promise we will never have to break."

Not True

He concluded: "And even if, by some bizarre miracle, we come to power in 2079 a million pounds will be worth about 4p."

ON OTHER PAGES

Hague promises to "hang unruly pupils" **94**

The Daily Telegraph

Great Inventions Of The World

Edited by **James Dyson**

No. 94 The Daily Telegraph

IT WAS in 1742 that a young Dorset engineer called William Deedes was working with the famous George Stephenson on the invention of the steam locomotive. It was his job to find a sedative to assist the early passengers to sleep during what was then the terrifying experience of travelling at 3mph.

After a false start with a dry ham roll and beaker of Early Grey tea, Deedes hit upon the formula which we now know as the Daily Telegraph.

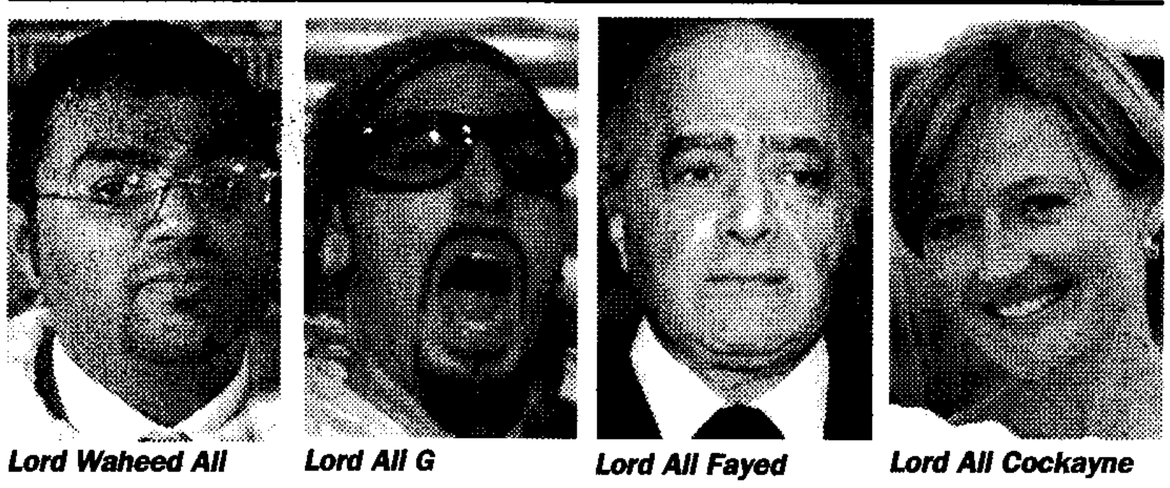
The first edition contained a crossword, a letter from a disgusted resident of Royal Tunbridge Wells, a copperplate engraving of Mistress Hurley attending the premiere of Mr Sheridan's new play "Four Nuptials and an Interment", plus an essay by Dr Samuel Boris Johnson defending the union.

It was an immediate success and generations of travellers have since used the Daily Telegraph as an effective aid to slumber.

Sadly, having failed to patent his invention, the young Deedes was forced to work for the rest of his 507 years as a junior reporter on the newspaper.

No. 95 The Partwork

This clever device for filling up newspapers was first *(continued next week)*



Lord Waheed Ali *Lord Ali G* *Lord Ali Fayed* *Lord Ali Cockayne*

Those Alis in full

Your handy cut-out-and-keep guide to Britain's new Ali-te

Lord Waheed Ali. Former student demonstrator turned Blairite, Lord Tariq of Ali is author of a recent play at the National *Red Ken At Night, Blair's In A Fright.*

Lord Ali G (alias Baron Cohen of Rothschild). Former lover of Will Carling, Ali G is now escorting Blairite spin-doctor Ali Campbell. Appears in humorous disguise on TV under pseudonym Ali Coren.

Lord Ali Fayed. Knightsbridge retailer formerly involved with Will Carling's ex-girlfriend Princess Diana, Fayed has changed his name to Mohamed Ali Fayed in honour of sporting hero Ali McCoist.

Lord Ali Cockayne. Former live-in lover of Julie Burchill now set to marry the incredibly rich millionaire tycoon, Lord Waheed of Ali Baba *(see above)*.

ROY of the MORONS
ENGLAND AND GERMANY ARE TO PLAY AT CHARLEROI...
IT'S A REALLY SMALL STADIUM...
WILL BOTH SETS OF FANS GET IN?
NO MONSIEUR
THAT'S ALRIGHT
WE'LL FIGHT EACH OTHER IN THE STREETS AS USUAL
COME ON YOU DEADS
ROOPER

Daily Mail

PROFILE

The weird world of the right-wing nutcase

A SINISTER figure in a baseball cap, this man wanted to start a campaign of terror in London with a series of political bombshells that would spread fear and panic amongst the population. He targeted foreigners, gays and those he called "the liberal elite". Neighbours described him as "a bit of a Conservative leader" and when police raided his flat they found pictures of Mrs Thatcher all over the wall *(Are you sure this is right? Ed.)*

PROMOTION OF 'ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE' CRITICISED

by **Santa Claus** (28)

STAGECOACH boss Brian Souter has been criticised for publishing offensive material that actively encourages experimenting with an unnatural way of life.

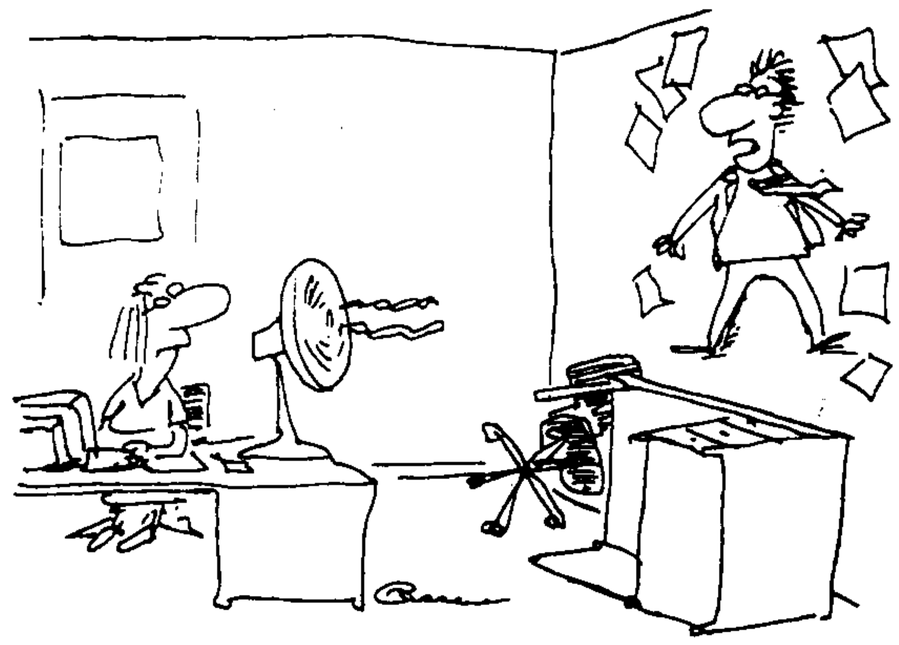
"In many public places you'll find timetables promoting the use of public transport," said one disgusted practising homosexual. "These seemingly innocent works of fiction encourage impressionable young minds to experiment with waiting for buses in public.

"I accept that this is a choice that can be made by mature consenting commuters," he admitted, "but youngsters may not be ready for the tragic downside of such a lifestyle, which involves loitering furtively on street corners for hours at a time waiting for a privatised bus that never comes."

Brian Souter is 56 (times richer than everyone else).

6. HOW GOOD DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Handbook For Inspecting Primary & Nursery Schools



"I said, would you mind turning down your fan?"

Daily Mail

COMMENT

Is this the most disgusting picture you have ever seen?

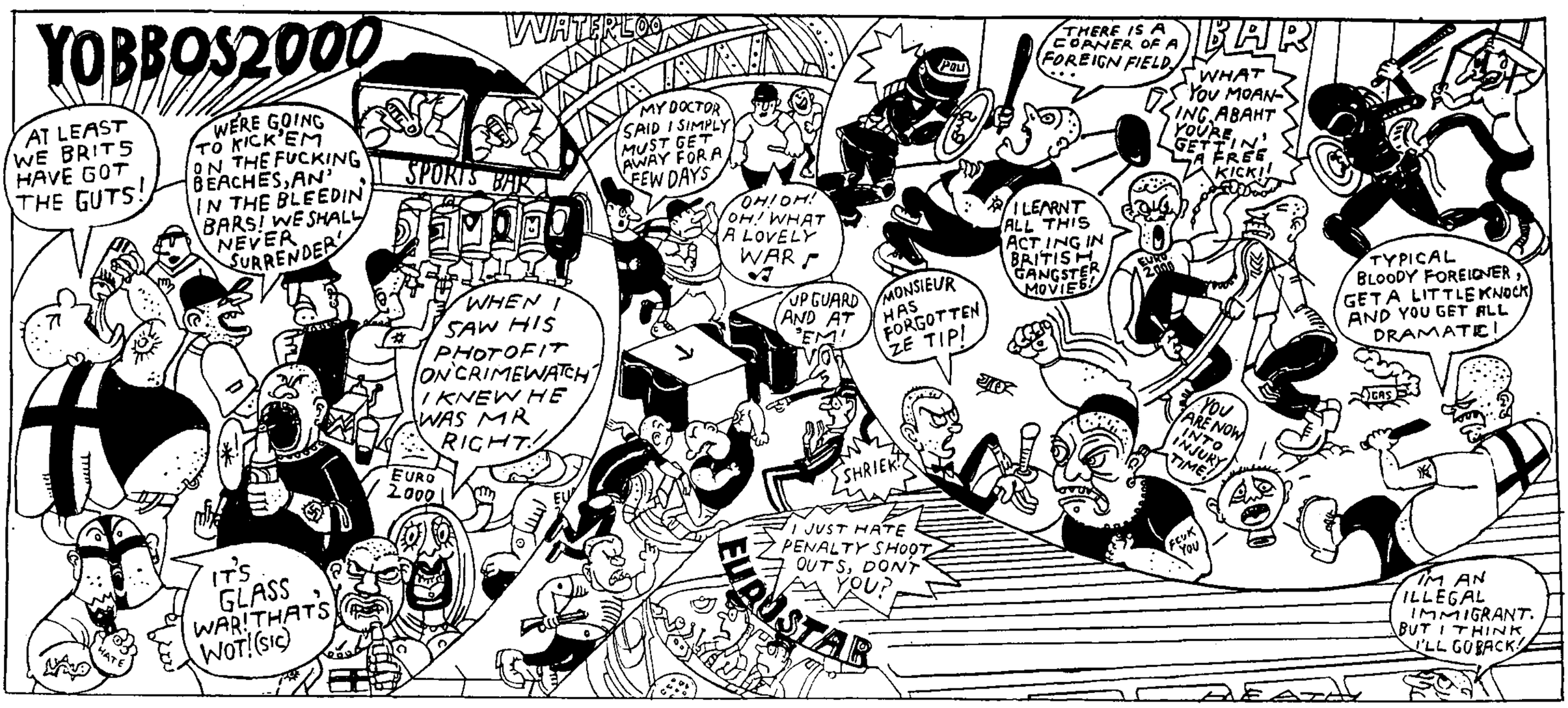
IN TODAY'S Daily Mail we are showing you the depths to which some sections of the media will go in order to attract readers *(Surely "viewers"? Ed.)*. **Tune in to page 9** *(Surely "Channel Five"? Ed.)* **and you will see scenes that make us all ashamed to be British.**

On page 10 there are pictures that should shock you even more.

How could Channel Five sink so low as to broadcast this filth and, if you want something a bit harder, squire, try our centre pages for Keith Chegwin's ultimate raunchy romp. *(Surely "descent into the moral abyss"? Ed.)*

© Daily Mail Genitalia — "First with the nudes".

HEATH'S PRIVATE VIEW


YOBBOS2000
AT LEAST WE BRITS HAVE GOT THE GUTS!
WE'RE GOING TO KICK 'EM ON THE FUCKING BEACHES, AN' IN THE BLEEDIN' BARS! WE SHALL NEVER SURRENDER!
WATERLOO
SPORTS BAR
MY DOCTOR SAID I SIMPLY MUST GET AWAY FOR A FEW DAYS
OH! OH! OH! WHAT A LOVELY WAR
WHEN I SAW HIS PHOTOFIT ON CRIMEWATCH I KNEW HE WAS MR RIGHT!
EURO 2000
IT'S GLASS WAR! THAT'S WOT! (SIC)
HATE
UP GUARD AND AT 'EM!
MONSIEUR HAS FORGOTTEN ZE TIP!
SHRIEK!
I JUST HATE PENALTY SHOOT OUTS, DONT YOU?
EUROSTAR
THERE IS A CORNER OF A FOREIGN FIELD...
I LEARNT ALL THIS ACTING IN BRITISH GANGSTER MOVIES!
BAR
WHAT YOU MOANING ABAHT YOURE GETTIN' A FREE KICK!!
YOU ARE NOW INTO INJURY TIME!
FCUK YOU
TYPICAL BLOODY FOREIGNER, GET A LITTLE KNOCK AND YOU GET ALL DRAMATIC!
GAS
I'M AN ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT. BUT I THINK I'LL GO BACK!

COURT CIRCULAR

HIGHGROVE
HRH the Prince of Wales will be the host at a special luncheon to mark the first official meeting between the Mistress Royal, Dame Camilla Parker-Knoll, and Her Majesty the Queen. The Mistress Royal has been prepared for this meeting through a course of instruction given by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. Her Majesty will greet the Mistress Royal with a traditional frosty look of the type normally granted only to Her Non-Royal Highness the Duchess Fergiana. There will then follow an embarrassed and silent luncheon, at which the following dishes will be on the menu:

Chilled Windsor Soup
Cold Tongue Pie
Cold Shoulder of Mutton
Never-To-Be-Queen of Puddings

GATCOMBE PARK
HRH the Princess Royal will grant an exclusive interview to the Grocer Magazine in which she will praise the virtues of genetically-modified foodstuffs, and will describe their critics as "big-eared loopy weirdos living in Gloucestershire with their mistresses".

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
HRH the Prince Philip will add his two-pennyworth to the above debate, by describing genetically-modified organisms as "a bloody useful way to keep the natives fed when their bongo-bongo harvest fails." He will go on to describe critics of GMOs as "pathetic wimps who will never be king so long as I have anything to do with it".

Camilla And The Queen – Where Do We Go From Here?

By Lady Antonia Holden, the Lord Blake, the Lord St John of Fawningsley, Mr James Witless, Mr Ben Pimlotofrubbish and assorted other snobs and bores

THE historic meeting of Camilla Parker-Bowles and the Queen raises a number of important constitutional questions.

The first is do you want 1000 words or 2000?

The second is how much do we get? £2000 or £4000?

And the third is – is this enough? *(No. Ed.)*

No student of the complexities of British constitutional procedure can fail *(cont'd. p. 94)*

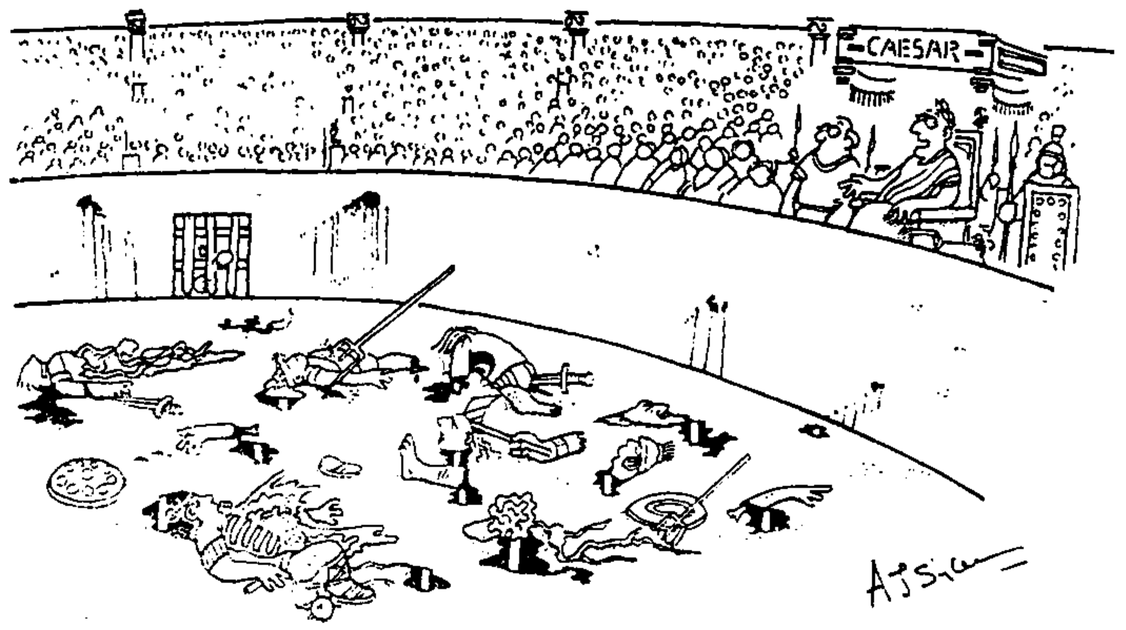
MARRIAGE 'NOT ON THE CARDS'

by **A.N. Idiot**

DESPITE THE historic meeting between Camilla Parker-Bowles and the Queen, senior Buckingham Palace sources have sought to play down any talk of marriage.

"The Queen would of course have to first divorce Prince Philip," he said, "and the prospect of the first Royal lesbian marriage will inevitably upset many in the Church."

Privately though, he admitted the couple have met with the Archbishop of Canterbury who is seeking to smooth the way for their eventual union.



"I fancy a salad!"

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

THE STORY SO FAR: the distinguished novelist Mr Will Self has been asked by the Independent *to sit in an art gallery writing down whatever comes into his head. Now read on...*

Erm *(takes panic-stricken look at small knot of journalists, uncomprehending teenage girls, etc)*. Lunch was crap. I can feel the ball of ill-digested pâté de fois gras swivelling in my intestinal labyrinth like some searing oesophagal shotgun pellet. A fart cracks out of my tremulously overloaded sphincter with whiplash poignance. Windful, windy wind, winding its way windily out of the steatopygous Grand Canyon of my buttocks. Um *(looks up to see the bouffant-haired figure of Mr John Walsh scribbling excitedly in a notebook)* I've been flung – of that much I'm certain – flung large amounts of money, spun a couple of times like a twist of mephitic, mephistophelean candyfloss and then slammed down here.

The first thing I'm aware of are the voices, those random snippets of nonsensical chat, fragments of a few irrelevancies irrelevantly realised in gaunt, dauntless chambers where I can't share them, er, "What's that bloke doing over there?", "Isn't this supposed to be an art gallery?", "Yes, we've stopped taking the *Independent* actually."

Yes... blotched-face gorgonzola-grouted gargoyles, swarthy, earthy, turfy, preposterously phallic noses dangling over the scrotal pouches of their cheeks...

"... Obviously this guy has been given too much money. Did you read his last one? Awesomely bad," they gawp. They're accomplished gawpers these two, gawping warpedly, sniggering at my suffering, sniffing at my socks, smiling at my dithering, er... how much longer do I have to sit here? Doesn't this place ever close?... *(Continued for 94 days)*

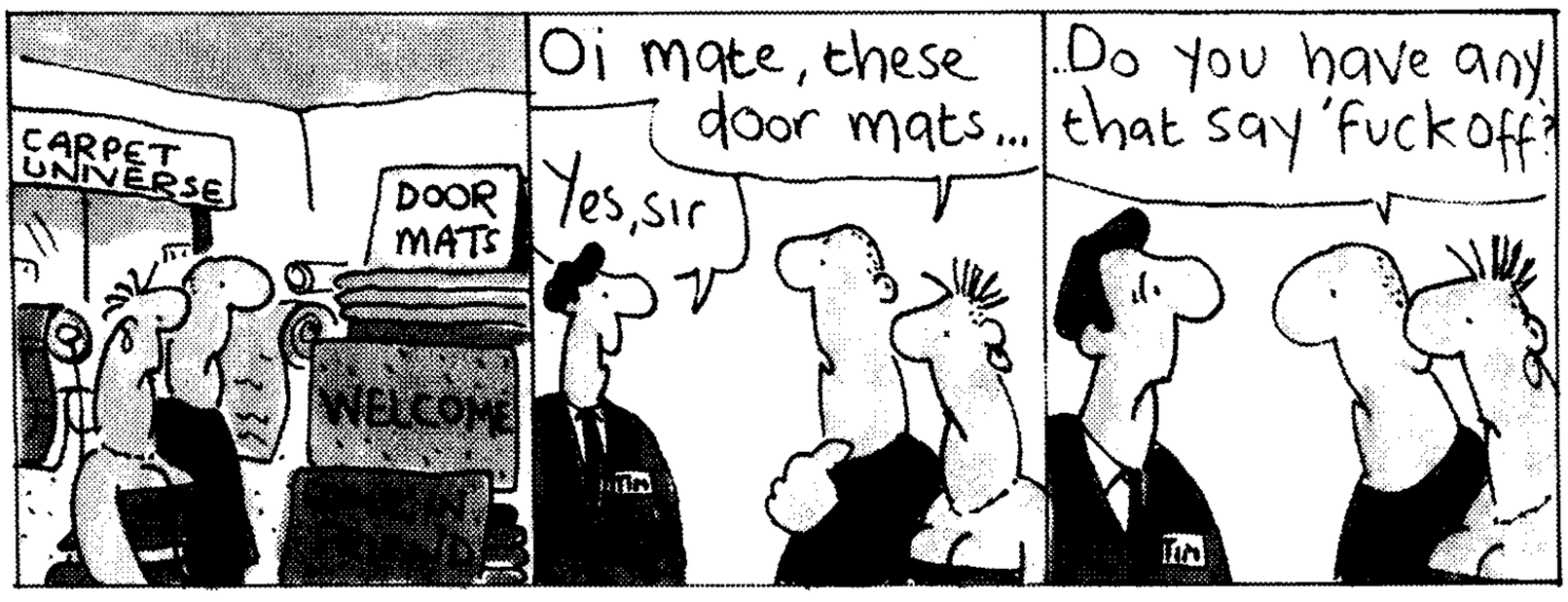
LATE NEWS

HORRIFIC AIR CRASH LEAVES FAMOUS SURVIVOR

AN HORRIFIC air crash yesterday left a famous man alive yesterday, as people looked on in horror at the tangled wreckage that wasn't the final resting place for the well-known face.

Said one of the eyewitnesses: "We got to the scene of the crash only seconds after it happened. Once there, we were greeted by this horrible burning mess, and I remember thinking to myself at the time – thank God the famous person is still alive, unlike the one who isn't."

HUSBAND



DIARY

JANET STREET-PORTER'S BIG THOUGHTS

Like, since I've been editor of the Independent on Sunday its circulation has begun to reflect its cult status. Sorry guys, but all suggestions by the toffee-nosed community that I was somehow going to make it "popular" are well and truly knocked sideways by my Janet Street-Porter column (that's me, folks!).

The future of the NHS: Dave Stewart came up to me in a swanky new restaurant last week – I would've been dining with Elton, bless him, but for a last minute cancellation – and told me how well-chuffed he was to see me. We schlepped on about this and that – GM foods, the future of the modern novel, the possibility of nuclear disarmament, the brilliant new Phlegm Gang CD – before our natterooni got round to the future of the NHS.

Well, I said, however bad the NHS is now it can't be half as bad as the new Ben Elton movie, which I found dreadfully disappointing (sperm jokes? Come on, guys – *puh-leeeaase!*) even though take it from me Ben's a truly likeable bloke. For me, the NHS is a bit like the new TV series spin-off (rip-off, more like!) of *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* – it used to be one whole lot better, and my advice is – in the memorable words of the Beatles classic number "Get Back To Where You Once Belonged".

Memo to Secretary of State for Health Alan Milburn: Give it all you got, Al. And then some.

Talk about a guy having a lot on his plate. Which reminds me, Dave Stewart said the Risotto Nero was totally ace. Surely there's some way we could get it served to the long-term patients in the NHS – it doesn't take a genius to know that it would only take Dave's risotto, plus a good blastin' from the new Snoop Doggy Dogg CD to get them patients on their feet again. Eat your heart out, inventor of penicillin Dr Roger Bannister!

A solution to Inner-City poverty: Personally, I've never had a problem with the inner-city. In my humble opinion, it provides a fast and efficient service, getting commuters fastly and efficiently from A to wherever. So what exactly are the so-called experts on about when they rattle on about "inner-city poverty", then? Give a girl a break! Well, just because I haven't myself seen poverty on the inner-city 125 doesn't mean to say it doesn't exist, does it? That would be just like saying that just because I haven't personally seen God he doesn't exist, though, frankly, let's face it, guys, I don't think He does exist, or at least not as the proverbial old man with the long beard, I mean, get a life, who wants some old grandad like that for a God, especially when there are so many vibrant and totally passionate and spontaneous younger icons around to worship like Tracey Emin and Will Self and the Pet Shop Boys, right?

Memo to the Prime Minister: Look, Tony, I know you're up to your neck in dirty nappies, but isn't it high blood time you did something about inner-city poverty? Basically, I agree with Elton that you're doing a pretty good job – and, believe me, it's certainly not easy being Prime Minister – but it's frankly a disgrace that in this day and age there should still be beggars on our trains, if there are, which there aren't. Cheers, Tone – and Elton joins me in sending his best to Cherie, okay?

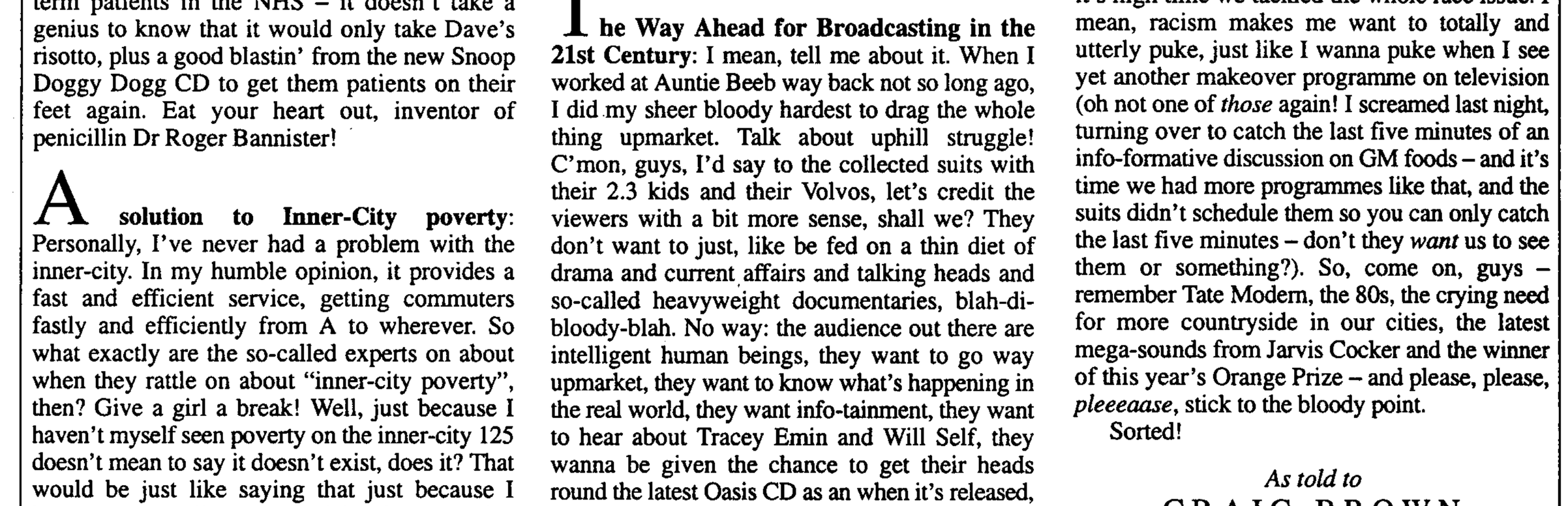
The Way Ahead for Broadcasting in the 21st Century: I mean, tell me about it. When I worked at Auntie Beeb way back not so long ago, I did my sheer bloody hardest to drag the whole thing upmarket. Talk about uphill struggle! C'mon, guys, I'd say to the collected suits with their 2.3 kids and their Volvos, let's credit the viewers with a bit more sense, shall we? They don't want to just, like be fed on a thin diet of drama and current affairs and talking heads and so-called heavyweight documentaries, blah-di-bloody-blah. No way: the audience out there are intelligent human beings, they want to go way upmarket, they want to know what's happening in the real world, they want info-tainment, they want to hear about Tracey Emin and Will Self, they wanna be given the chance to get their heads round the latest Oasis CD as an when it's released, they wanna be told 'bout culture (The Pet Shop Boys, Tracey Emin), and sure, they want to hear all the latest from the top troublespots like Kosovo and wherever – but only if you can be bothered to put a halfway decent soundtrack by musicians of the sheer quality of The Verve on it, to give it a bit of edge.

But did they listen? Did they bloody heck as like. Yesterday, I watched television. I can't remember the name of the programme, who it had on it, what it was about, or even if I'd switched the set on. Talk about British Broadcasting Standards! It all drives me well potty. Come off it, guys – isn't it about time you sat up and actually *did* something?

Sticking to the Point: Isn't it high time we as a supposedly civilised civilisation began sticking to the point? Is it me, or do I keep reading things that seem totally incapable of sticking to the point? Over dinner (mascarpone and walnut flan to *die* for! Have you noticed how Moroccan food now seems very 1990s?) with Dave Stewart the other night, I put this question to him. I said, listen, Dave, you're like a world mega-star, right, and you've been responsible for some truly ace sounds, and I think you look better without that beard, so where do you stand on, like, GM food and the Middle East? Or to put it a different way, if we as a society can create something as vibrant and truly unforgettable as Tate Modern, shouldn't we also be able to reduce heart disease? The latest figures for heart disease show we're one of the worst countries in the world, or Europe, or the UK, or something, or was it the best, or somewhere in the middle, but either way, it's high time we tackled the whole race issue. I mean, racism makes me want to totally and utterly puke, just like I wanna puke when I see yet another makeover programme on television (oh not one of *those* again! I screamed last night, turning over to catch the last five minutes of an info-formative discussion on GM foods – and it's time we had more programmes like that, and the suits didn't schedule them so you can only catch the last five minutes – don't they *want* us to see them or something?). So, come on, guys – remember Tate Modern, the 80s, the crying need for more countryside in our cities, the latest mega-sounds from Jarvis Cocker and the winner of this year's Orange Prize – and please, please, *pleeeaase*, stick to the bloody point.

Sorted!

As told to
CRAIG BROWN


YOU KNOW ME, JOHNSON, I'VE ALWAYS HAD A TERRIBLE HEAD FOR FIGURES... KEEPING TRACK OF MY MONEY IS A NIGHTMARE...
I'VE GOT SCORES OF FINANCIAL ADVISERS, BUSINESS MANAGERS AND ACCOUNTANTS AND NOT ONE OF THEM CAN TELL ME WHERE I STAND FINANCIALLY...
I MEAN, WHAT DOES THIS LITTLE LOT ADD UP TO, JOHNSON?
ER... SO PLUS 30 PLUS 18... MAKES... 98...
...YOU HAVE 98 BANK ACCOUNTS SIR...
OH RIGHT... THANKS. SORTED...

Literary Review

Gravy train

The Return Of The Naked Chef
Jamie Oliver
(Michael Joseph, £20)

River Cafe Cook Book Green
Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers
(Ebury Press, £30)

WHY bother writing books? It's a question most writers ask themselves from time to time — such as when they get up in the morning, when they sit down to work and just before they throw themselves off the tops of tall buildings.

It's not as though anyone reads books any more, and if it weren't for the chefs, they wouldn't be buying them either. Of every pound spent on books in Britain, 30p or so goes to the retailer, 10p or so to the distributor, 20p or so to the publisher and all the rest goes to chefs. The phrase "cooking the books" has never had such resonance.

Jamie Oliver's latest, for example, sold more than 16,000 copies in the week of publication. (Second in the bestseller list was his own previous book, which short-sighted cookery fans may have bought by mistake.) Although only eight years old, Oliver is already established in the Delia super-league, with his own show on BBC2 and millions of adoring fans, many of them young and female.

His is a charmed existence. Shaky cameras attend his every move as he knocks up a three-course meal in 25 minutes for a coachload of leggy lovelies who just happen to be coming round that evening. Never mind that the groovy flat isn't his, or that the show takes up to four days to film (in reality it's as spontaneous as opera). Even a well-judged Guardian smear on the uncookability of his recipes has failed to have any effect. The young shaver sells in a week what some novelists sell in a lifetime, and there's absolutely nothing anyone can do about it.

Not that this makes his books any easier or enjoyable to use. The main problem is Oliver's prose style, a terrifyingly breezy thing that has the same cumulative effect as a diet consisting solely of fruit pastilles. "I'm a right one for munchies and snacks, and the whole tapas thing really gets me going," he reveals. "My missus, sorry, the lovely Jules, often finds me watching telly late at night after work or a band practice gnawing on some stale old bread, pickled chillies and various other preserved or recycled dinners." (Band practice. Nice touch.) Soups are "dead simple to make". (Everything in this book is "easy" or "brilliant" or "bloomin' gorgeous", when of course it's not "pukka".)

Of pasta and risotto: "If you can crack one of these two then your mates are gonna think you are a bit clever." Ready, Jamie? "I'm gagging for it." Perhaps this is really how he speaks, but between hard covers in a sans serif typeface it all feels fantastically phoney, as well as making you seriously think about going out and buying a baseball bat.

Rather more restrained is the new one from those original sun-dried tomatoes, Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers of the River Café. Having shown us more Italian cooking than even the Italians knew about in volumes one or two, the New Labour favourites now turn their attentions to fruit and vegetables, with immensely lucrative results. With Jamie, just about anything goes, but Rose and Ruth tend to be stricter with their readers. "We choose to cook with small leeks," they say, implying that anyone who cooks with large leeks really hasn't been paying attention.

"We put rocket — or rucola in Italian — into salads in both winter and summer." No explanation: that's just the way it is. If the Ayatollah Khomeini had written a cook book, this is what it would have been like. Flicking past these terrifyingly elaborate dishes, you idly wonder what it would be like to cook one of them, before slipping the volume back on the shelf where, in some households, it will remain unopened long after we are all dead.

For that's the joy of cook books: you don't have to use them or even read them to get the most out of them. No, the modern branded cook book is what marketing men would call "a lifestyle statement": it says more about you than personality ever can. If you have Jamie on your shelf, you are young, hip and devil-may-care, and you don't mind people who say "Lovely jubbly" without irony. If you have Rose and Ruth on your shelf, you are on-message, holiday in Tuscany, and you once met Peter Mandelson at a cocktail party. Each book also has lots of nice big photographs of food. Far more fun than reading, and a snip at £50 the pair. No wonder writers fall all around us like autumn leaves.

Books & Bookmen

■ NO SOONER does Faber's Jon Riley regain possession of Roger Lewis' biography of Anthony Burgess (see last *Eye*) than he loses *The Filth and the Fury*, the tie-in book for Julien Temple's FilmFour-backed documentary on the Sex Pistols.

The book's originator, St Martin's Press — the US offshoot of Macmillan — told Faber it was no longer able to sell Faber the UK rights due to a legal fracas with the Pistol formerly known as Johnny Rotten, John Lydon. However, with Macmillan's Boxtree imprint having recently signed an exclusive deal with FilmFour to publish tie-in books, is it possible the withdrawal had more to do with a belated desire to keep the book in the corporate family?

Perhaps the gravity or otherwise of Lydon's complaint can be gauged from the fact that the US edition came out on time and that imported copies are now finding their way into the capital's bookshops.

■ *WITH Tim Waterstone's putative bid for his old company that he founded rivalling the HarperCollins/Fourth Estate takeover rumours on the "all talk, no action" front, a surprise white knight for Waterstone's may have emerged in the form of Pearson.*

Alan "the Weasel" Giles has always claimed to be a "great mate" of Pearson's Marjorie Scardino from their days on the WH Smug board. However, no one at Brentford believed him — until recently.

Brian Landers left Waterstone's for Pearson last year, having seemingly fallen out with Giles. But the pair met up recently in New York, closely followed by a visit from Landers to Waterstone's head office. What were they discussing?

'Bookworm'

"What have you got that I can microwave while I'm watching cookery programmes

OPERA NEWS

THE late John Gielgud had no ear and, though he sometimes directed opera, never quite grasped that singing was the essence of it all. Rehearsing Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Covent Garden, he once got frustrated as the score rolled on and on and eventually he could take it no more. He emerged from the darkness of the auditorium and protested: "Do, *do* stop that *terrible* music."

In recent weeks the cry from audiences and critics at Glyndebourne — normally a wise and wondrous institution — has been: "Do, *do* stop these *terrible* productions." For Glyndebourne was silly enough to commit itself to a series of shows which were wreathed in doom from the start.

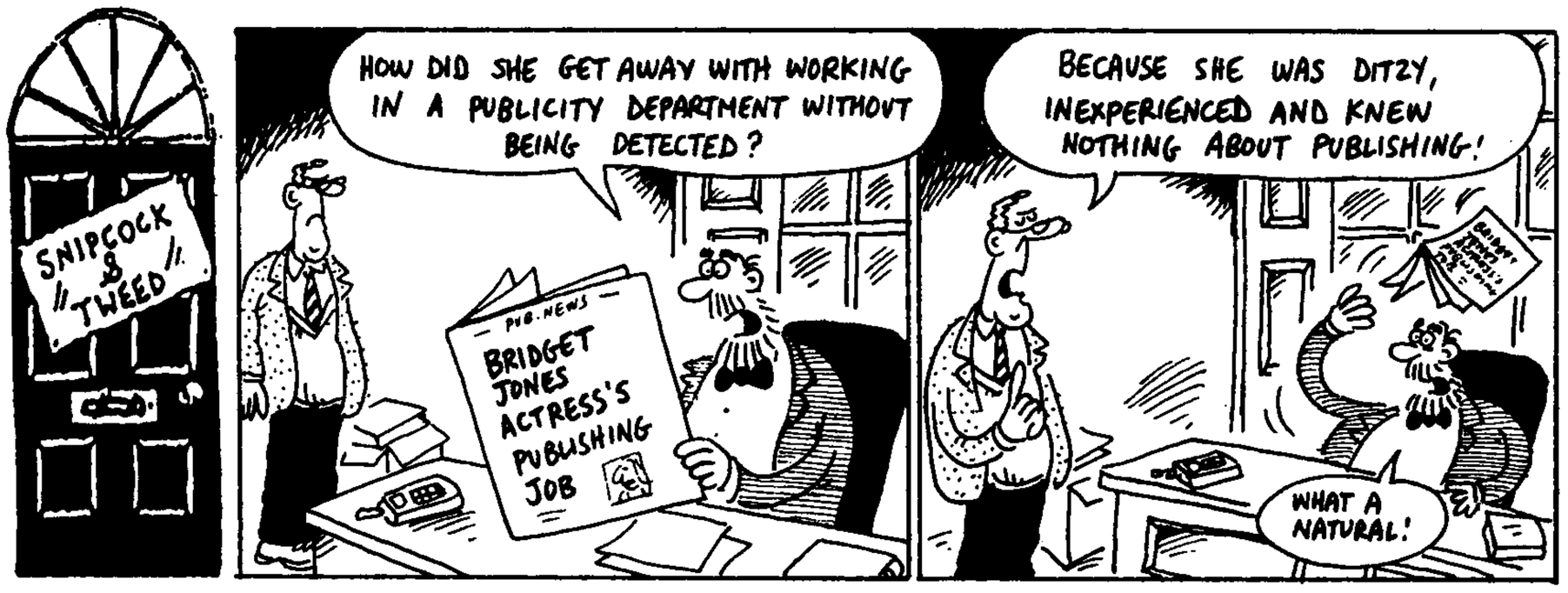
The idea was for Graham Vick, outgoing head of production, to stage all three of the Mozart/Da Ponte operas in a similar, stripped-down way as if they were rehearsals for the real thing (which we never see). They would all play on essentially the same bare set, designed to look like a rehearsal space: a sort of school hall with three whitewashed walls and a radiator.

It might just have worked if Vick had found some way to make the characters (partly in jeans and t-shirts) interesting. But he didn't. And when *Cosi fan Tutte* opened in 1998 it was the dullest evening Glyndebourne audiences had seen in years.

Such things happen – but they shouldn't happen regularly. Alas, the current season opened to general dismay with a *Figaro* done in that same rehearsal space with our old friend the radiator. *Cosi* has just revived and a matching *Don Giovanni* opens on 15 July. Cancel no engagements.

Vick was once the hot young talent of the British opera world, rising through the ranks of English National Opera (ENO) and Scottish Opera to become a worldwide name. And perhaps that's the problem: he has worked himself into the ground and the ideas have died. If he has any sense he'll take his departure from Glyndebourne as the opportunity for a well-earned rest.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
HOW DID SHE GET AWAY WITH WORKING IN A PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT WITHOUT BEING DETECTED?
PUB. NEWS
BRIDGET JONES ACTRESS'S PUBLISHING JOB
BECAUSE SHE WAS DITZY, INEXPERIENCED AND KNEW NOTHING ABOUT PUBLISHING!
WHAT A NATURAL!

IN THE BACK POWLES APART

AN increasingly common feature of great disasters, it seems, is the emergence in the media soon after any tragedy of a "mystery man" who was seen at the scene and may have been responsible for it.

After the King's Cross tube fire in 1988, the *Daily Mail* uncovered a mystery man in blue overalls who was allegedly seen by witnesses in circumstances where he could have set fire to the escalator. In the event, the fire was proved at a public inquiry to have been caused by a lighted cigarette end in the piles of rubbish which had accumulated under the noses of London Underground. Right to the end, though, the *Daily Mail* persisted in pursuing the mystery man in blue overalls who never existed.

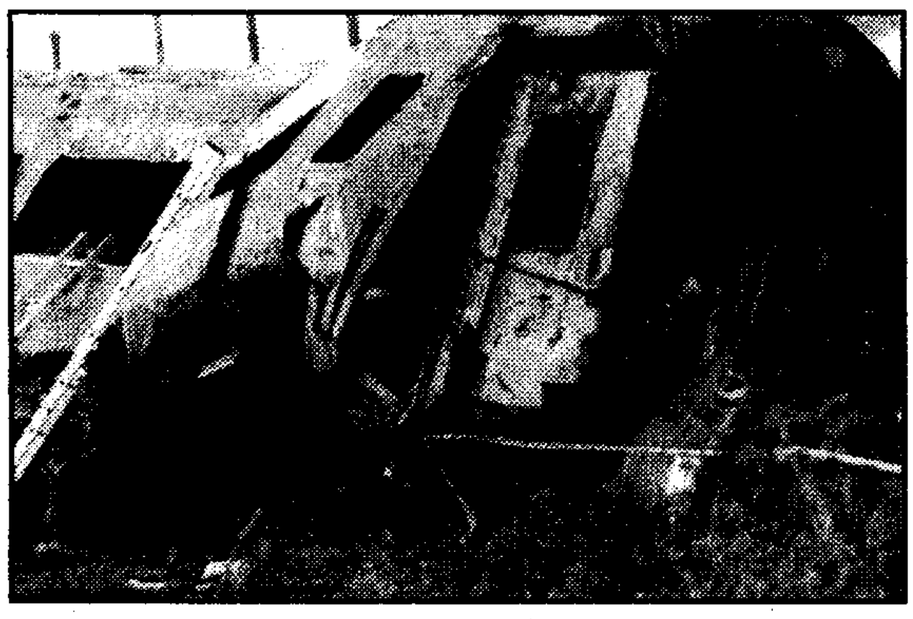
Something strangely similar seems to be going on in the aftermath of last October's horrific rail crash at Paddington. Almost immediately after the crash, rumours started to circulate about a mystery man (in some cases even a mystery blonde) who had been in the cab with Michael Hodder, the driver of the Thames train which crashed into a high-speed Great Western Train at full speed.

The rumour was given full credence on the front page of the *Evening Standard* on 8 October, soon after the crash. MYSTERY OF THE THIRD MAN: THAMES DRIVER MAY HAVE BEEN DISTRACTED BY PERSON TRAVELLING BEHIND HIM were the headlines over a story by Richard Holliday and Dick Murray. The story started not with a fact, but a theory:

"Train driver Michael Hodder may not have been alone in the cab of his Thames turbo when it crashed into the Cheltenham Express, it emerged yesterday." Exactly how this story "emerged" was not made clear, though the authors suggested the mystery man may have been a trainee driver who was on the train with Hodder.

"The investigators", the story went on, "are keen to interview the trainee who was found after the crash wandering dazed and shocked near the wreckage. He is understood to be staying at an address not disclosed to the authorities, possibly with friends or colleagues, while he recovers."

There were various other similar hints at distractions in the cab of the doomed Thames Train driver, but it was not until the Cullen inquiry opened last month that the theory that the dead driver may have been distracted was given a further airing. In his opening statement to the inquiry, Stephen Powles QC, leader of the formidable team of lawyers representing Railtrack, said again and again that Mr Hodder may have been "distracted" in his cab. This would surely explain why he went through a red light which had been passed at danger so many times in previous months without any prompt action by Railtrack to solve the problem.



Burnt out: one of the Paddington carriages

Unfortunately for Mr Powles, the *Evening Standard*'s mystery man was not available, for the very good reason that he never existed. All the bodies from the disaster, including Michael Hodder's, have been retrieved and identified. There was no one in the cab with him, so if anything did distract him, it was certainly not a mystery man or even a mystery blonde.

Instead, distinguished Railtrack counsel fastened on another theory — that Mr Hodder, whose work record was exemplary, was ringing his wife on a mobile phone to discuss their son's birthday. The problem with this theory was that there was not a jot of evidence to back it up. How therefore could learned counsel refer to it?

Stephen Powles QC

The chance came during the evidence of Scott Dicker, the not very mysterious trainee who was indeed travelling in the cab at the back of the crashed Thames Train. The reaction of Mr Dicker and his mate Adrian Barell, as soon as they could free themselves from their cab, which had turned over on its side, was to take prompt emergency action to stop all further trains on the line, and then to return to the train to help survivors get out. Both men were warmly commended by the Cullen inquiry when they gave evidence on 19 May.

When he rose to put questions to Mr Dicker, however, Mr Powles QC had one thing on his mind:

Q: Do some drivers have mobile phones?

A: Some do, I suppose yes.

Q: You travelled in with Mr Hodder that morning?

A: I travelled on the same train.

Q: Yes, and spoke to him after you arrived.

A: Yes.

Q: I see from your statement that you spoke about his father.

A: Yes.

Q: Did he talk about his son at all?

A: No.

Q: Did he mention a birthday?

A: No

Q: Did you see whether or not he had a mobile phone?

A: No.

That was all. The rumour had been floated without a scintilla of evidence to support it. Mr Dicker could not provide a single answer to comfort Mr Powles or his clients. A firmer answer came soon enough, from Michael Rix, general secretary of the engine drivers' union, Aslef. On 24 May, in a press release, he said this:

"Last week Railtrack's counsel at Lord Cullen's inquiry raised the possibility that at the time of the crash Michael Hodder might have been using a mobile phone to wish his son a happy birthday. Simple enquiry would have established that neither Mr Hodder nor his wife owned a mobile phone and that it was not his son's birthday either."

Lord Cullen has criticised Aslef for putting out this press release but has so far uttered not a word of criticism of Stephen Powles QC for smearing a dead driver without evidence. Nor has Railtrack explained why, after such a smear, it is continuing to pay Mr Powles fat fees for his services.

£ £ £ £ GREED UNLIMITED! £ £ £ £

A TORY bill to allow partners in the big accountancy firms to "sleep easy at night" has been rushed through parliament by "new" Labour. The chief effect will be to allow companies to become "limited liability partnerships".

What this means is that the partners will not be liable for breach of contract; they will only be liable in tort, which as Kim Howells, the under secretary for trade and former miners' union militant, proudly told the Commons, "may be much more difficult to prove". The new partnerships will also be blessed with a number of tax advantages, easy to exploit for their accountants.

Incompetent auditing

Ever since the great bankruptcies of the late Thatcher period and subsequently (Polly Peck, BCCI, Maxwell, etc, etc) fat cat accountants have become increasingly worried about their personal liability for their firms' incompetent auditing. Much of the sloppy auditing has been caused by the big five accountancy firms doing cheap audits in exchange for more lucrative non-audit work for the same company. This practice is illegal in many other countries because of the obvious temptation for accountancy firms to give the thumbs up to dodgy accounts (see *Eye* 998).

At one stage in the mid-1990s all the big accountancy firms were suing each other, alleging negligent audits of their clients' accounts. These claims have mostly been settled secretly for a lot less than they might have raised in open court actions. But the hugely rich top partners in the accountancy firms have become obsessively worried about claims against them personally. In a panic, they went to Jersey in the Channel Islands where they bought off-the-shelf legislation to protect them from writs.

This effort collapsed when the Inland Revenue declared that the new Jersey-based partnerships would be taxed as if they were ordinary companies. It was then that the big five decided that their best hopes lay with the British government. The Tories quickly obliged with a consultative document, but then lost office.

The attention of the big five then focused on "new" Labour, with whose ministers they were already on more than friendly terms. The new bill was hurriedly squeezed into the government's packed programme, and has been welcomed with shrieks of delight by the representatives of the big accountancy firms who sit in parliament.

Negligent partner

In the debate on the bill's second reading on 22 May, Nick Gibb, Tory MP for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, wailed about "the prospect of losing one's house and savings because of the negligence of a fellow partner whom one may not even have met". The negligent partner in an accountancy company, he said, would now be liable, though only in tort, but the remaining partners "will be able to sleep easy at nights knowing that their personal assets will be safe".

Mr Gibb, a chartered accountant, welcomed the bill. So did Stephen O'Brien, newly-elected Tory MP for Eddisbury, who has just become parliamentary adviser to the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

The Bill was opposed by one Labour peer in the Lords (Lord Phillips of Sudbury) and in the Commons by Austin Mitchell, Labour MP for Grimsby. Mitchell mocked the "tear-jerking spectacle of those in accountancy partnerships living in terror in case their yachts, farms, pubs and holiday retreats are suddenly confiscated". Only 2.7 per cent of accountants' assets had been lost as a result of legal liability, he revealed, and estimated that at least £200m would be lost in tax revenue as a result of the new bill's concessions to the Big Five. No one took a blind bit of notice, and the bill sailed through without a division.

PS: Until recently, Austin Mitchell wrote an irreverent column in the weekly magazine *Accountancy Age*. The column has been discontinued.

CRIME AND NO PUNISHMENT

TONY BURDEN, chief constable of South Wales, called a press conference last month to announce that five police officers had been disciplined after an incident in Cardiff three years ago, when two black victims of a race attack were arrested rather than their skinhead assailants.

In fact, as reported in the *Eye* last November, there had been outrage that only one officer was to face a disciplinary hearing. Four others were to be given an admonishment or words of advice — ie ticked off.

The two young victims, Marcus Walters and Francisco Borg, might themselves have ended up in jail had the incident not been captured on closed circuit television. Their car is seen to come under attack from a gang of pit-bull sporting white men, who threw a bike at the windscreen and smashed a side-window to get at them. Marcus and Francisco were arrested and charged with violent disorder — charges that were only dropped after the judge at their trial watched the CCTV video.

After pressure from the local Citizens Advice Bureau, three skinheads were eventually arrested and two were jailed for their part in the attack.

Francisco, Marcus and his mother filed formal complaints and the actions of the South Wales officers involved were investigated by South Wales police supervised by the police complaints authority (PCA). That inquiry found no fault in the arrests, detention or treatment of Marcus and Francisco. It cleared the officers of racism and was critical only of officers failing to take control of the scene. One officer was charged with neglect of duty and discreditable conduct, the rest were to get a ticking off.

At the disciplinary hearing last month the officer was cleared of neglect of duty and one incident of discreditable conduct. He was "found guilty" only of "winking and smiling" at one of the white defendents in court.

Now, the audacious Police Federation, the officers' trade union, is threatening libel writs against their chief for suggesting they were all "disciplined" and slurring their good names. A "ticking off" in the form of words of advice doesn't even go on police employment records.

PS: Two other South Wales officers were also "admonished" a few weeks ago after Marcus' mother lodged further complaints after she was pulled up in her car by officers who then went through her shopping demanding to see receipts. Two weeks ago she was pulled up again while driving out with her elderly mother by officers who asked if her de-mister was on and what was she doing out so late. She has filed another complaint.

Ill Met...

THE South Wales boys still have a lot to learn from the Metropolitan police, however. Over the past four years Delroy Lindo, 40, and his 38-year-old-wife Sonia have been charged by the Met with a total of 18 offences — some trivial (having a dirty number plate) but some so serious (affray and threatening to kill) that they carry the threat of up to 10 years in jail.

Every time the prosecution has collapsed, been abandoned or the police version of events has not stood up to the scrutiny of magistrates, judges or juries. The reason for the Knackers' persistence? It is surely no coincidence that Mr Lindo spearheads campaigns against police racism and is a friend of Winston Silcott.

What makes the behaviour of north London officers so extraordinary is that it has carried on in the face of numerous complaints to Sir Paul Condon, former chief constable, the police complaints authority (PCA), home secretary Jack Straw, Tony Blair and local MP Barbara Roach. The Lindo family has had numerous meetings with senior officers — all to no avail.

Now the couple are suing the Met. As well as allegations of continuing harassment, wrongful arrest, unlawful imprisonment and malicious prosecution, the family alleges assault for injuries suffered during some of the incidents.

The most recent case, which resulted in an acquittal by magistrates at Haringey, was typical. The court heard that in December last year Mr and Mrs Lindo had responded to a call on their mobile that their eldest son was being set upon by an older white male in Tottenham.

The Lindo family arrived moments ahead of the police. It was Mr Lindo who was arrested — and not the white man who had been seen by an independent witness to assault the boy. Mr Lindo was held in a neck lock, thrown on the ground, his hands cuffed behind his back, and hauled off to the police station.

In court it was alleged that Mr Lindo was one of the most violent men police had dealt with. He was accused of assaulting two officers and breach of the peace. The white man involved in the incident with Mr Lindo's son was called in support of the police. But other independent witnesses contradicted the account and the magistrates dismissed the case.

In another incident the couple were arrested after police followed them home in their car. Officers claimed Mr Lindo had been driving dangerously and at speed of up to 50mph in a built up area, narrowly missing a pedestrian, cyclist and bus. It was later pointed out that buses did not use the route described. Officers said they initially couldn't charge Mr Lindo because he was struggling and swearing too much — but neighbours said he was only asking why he was being arrested.

The case prompted the neighbours to complain to Sir Paul Condon, saying they were shocked by the "show of force" and "brutality" against a couple who had done nothing wrong. A jury at Wood Green crown court unanimously returned a not guilty verdict of dangerous driving. The prosecution did not proceed on further charges of using threatening words or behaviour against both Mr and Mrs Lindo. And so it goes on.

Sonia and Delroy Lindo

Their legal representative Carlos Anjos said: "I am shocked that we keep having to go back to court so many times to defend cases."

The Met said matters are being fully investigated by the police complaints authority. Meanwhile Mr and Mrs Lindo say the harassment continues. Only last month, just days before their last court appearance, the police twice stopped their eldest son on his moped and then followed him home and stopped him again.

● **THE Metropolitan police flying squad is not normally renowned for its love of nature and fossils. Yet in the 1980s progressive officers based at Walthamstow, north-east London, formed a group of like-minded lovers of geography which even had a football team. The name of the group was the Walthamstow Overseas Geographical Society (WOGS, *geddit?*)**

WOGS lasted well into the 1990s, at least until the name became, well, a little embarrassing — not to say proof positive of institutional racism in the Met. Among its more prominent members were: Detective Sergeant Jan Stivrins, a leading member of the Yard's crack anti-corruption force CIB3; Superintendent Brian Moore, who was also at CIB3 until he took charge of the Jill Dando murder case earlier this year; and Terry McGuinness, corrupt cop turned supergrass who is currently playing a nine-year away match at Her Majesty's Pleasure following his arrest by, er, CIB3 for supplying 80 kilos of cannabis.

STONY STAND-OFF

THE tree huggers perched in nests above Stanton Moor in the Peak District may be in for a record-breaking squat as they try to protect the ancient site from stone quarrying.

They have already been there for six months, but the decision over whether or not to allow stone merchant Stancliffe Stone to reopen two dormant quarries looks like being postponed for many more months while the courts untangle the vagaries of environmental law.

What is clear is that the moor's designation as a national park of outstanding natural beauty, with its Neolithic and bronze age remains — including the Nine Ladies stone circle and the nearby King stone — is no automatic protection against quarrying.

The problem is that Stancliffe possesses 50-year-old quarrying permits — still valid today — to re-open the two quarries near the stones. The only thing stopping the company is the ambiguous 1995 environment act, which says a company must satisfy "current environmental demands" before it can proceed.

It is hard to see how today's environmental demands could ever be met at such a site. English Heritage and the National Trust have recently lodged formal objections. But planning authorities, like the National Park Authority, cannot simply refuse permission because that would be simply revoking the licence. The only option is to approve the plan to quarry as submitted — which Stancliffe would love — or approve it with "reasonable" environmental modifications that it would make it impossible for quarrying to proceed.

Exactly what qualifies as environmental and reasonable — restrictions in lorries, amounts of stone allowed to be excavated, etc — is open to interpretation. That is why cases from North Yorkshire to Somerset are now wending their way through the appeal courts.

While the law remains so uncertain, it looks like Stancliffe and the park authority are prepared to waive the usual tight timing restrictions. Even then with both sides so opposed, the quarrying proposals will almost certainly go to a public inquiry. Several more Christmases in the trees are likely for those determined to support the locals in their opposition to the quarries.

Scania scandal

JULIAN GOSS, a shop steward and bus driver in Cardiff, contacts the *Eye* about our recent pieces on bus surges.

Mr Goss deals with disciplinary cases in the city, where the bus company is one of the few in the country still owned by the local authority. In recent months he has noticed a spate of such cases brought by the employers against drivers of Scania buses.

These buses have repeatedly surged forward when the drivers have not applied the accelerator. In each case the bus company has claimed that the drivers are clodhoppers who can't tell the difference between the brake and the accelerator and have slammed their foot on the wrong pedal. To prove its point, the city council even arranged for the brake and accelerator to be spaced further apart. Strangely, this didn't make the slightest difference and the surges continued.

Julian Goss says he has dealt with 15 cases in recent months. Most of the drivers who have reported surges are, he says, highly qualified and experienced. He points out that less than 10 percent of the buses in Cardiff are Scanias, but 100 percent of the surge cases involve Scanias. In any event the company is switching from Scanias to Dennis buses (for the liability of Dennis buses to surge, see *Eyes* 966 and 998 — see right).

You can contact Paul Foot on 020 7287 3183 or the In the Back team on 020 7437 4017

In the City

THE growing pressure over offshore tax havens is causing the foreign office to once again address the perennial problems posed by the remaining British colonies/dependencies in the Caribbean which feature on every financial regulators' list of usual suspects.

A report has been commissioned by foreign secretary Robin Cook from leading chartered accountants PriceWaterhouseCoopers on how regulation and policing in those remaining dots of red can be improved. It is more than 10 years since the Gallagher report recommended tightening controls in the Caribbean havens following a series of scandals.

The major purpose of the review would appear to be to cut the bill for policing some of the world's hottest havens. This follows a dispute over "who pays" between the FO and the International Development Agency.

Since Gallagher the scandals have continued despite new legislation and more regulation of banks and companies. But the bad guys, especially from the United States and Canada, continue to find a welcome in the Cayman Islands, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks & Caicos where secret bank accounts and opaque companies and trusts continue to be available for drug traffickers, fraudsmen and the like.

One of the key issues under consideration is whether Britain should cease seconding police officers to the Caribbean islands leaving policing to be bought and paid for locally. Those with knowledge of the islands see that as a budgetary driven option which will create not solve problems.

There has been no shortage of incidents where local police have proved less than cooperative when they are answerable to local politicians who themselves or their relatives are key players in the offshore business. In the Caymans a seconded senior Yard detective responsible for the region was banned from the islands by a former local police chief because his inquiries were unwelcome. Former government ministers or senior officials have been prosecuted in Montserrat and Turks & Caicos only to return to business.

Although under pressure from London all the dependencies have now passed all crimes legislation designed to curb money laundering and provide assistance to investigators pursuing dirty money trails, the problem is still enforcement. There is little will to take actions which will drive business away. The Caymans took no action over the Bank of Conmen and Cocaine International.

By encouraging places like the BVI and Turks to go into what is euphemistically called the financial services industry in order to reduce their reliance on British aid the foreign office created a Frankenstein monster. Now most of the islands are dependant on the jobs and income banks, trust companies and company formation bring despite the role of tourism. So just saying "no" is not an option for local politicians.

They also rely on the arms dealer's alibi — if we don't, somebody else will. And there is no shortage of other havens — especially in the South Pacific as well as old favourites like Panama, Liberia and Liechtenstein — happy to do the business.

Among the aggressive bidders for bad business are also some of Britain's former colonies in the sun. Places like Belize, Antigua and St Kitts appear regularly on regulatory radar.

Belize became an offshore haven of choice for dirty money and rust bucket coffin ships after the financial services sector was created by my Lord Ashcroft. His bank also pops up in the Turks & Caicos. Ashcroft has sold all but his banking interests, however a grateful Belize is rewarding him with a knighthood to go with his peerage for funding the Tories.

A similar privatised deal in Antigua has resulted in a series of bank scandals many linked to Russian organised crime.

The approach to enforcement taken by many of the havens is amply illustrated by the Cayman government which sought through the courts to prevent the US authorities utilising bank records obtained from the Guardian Bank. These showed it had been happily helping any number of American citizens — including two of those involved in the Salvation Army fraud — to hide their money.

With the major economic powers pressing for a clampdown on tax haven operations it would be ironic if Britain, which oversees more havens than any other country (don't forget the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and Gibraltar) should for cost-cutting reasons give the business a boost by handing them more control over their dubious activities.

FORMER Wall Street insider trader turned informer Ivan Boesky has been expressing interest in trading in London where he was a major player until the Feds took him down, unravelling the Guinness scandal and deposing junk bond king Michael Milken.

Boesky was jailed for three years in 1987 and paid a $100m fine. As Milken, who received more jail time and paid more in fines, has been allowed to become an investor in a London listed company, no doubt Boesky's view was why not me.

So some time ago Boesky approached a small firm of London brokers. The brokers raised Boesky with the Stock Exchange who somewhat surprisingly gave approval as long as all his trades were reported on a daily basis. The brokers then had second thoughts. But that does not mean he is not out there.

THE Serious Farce Office appears to be losing its fight to run a national fraud squad. The SFO has a handful of ex-police investigators but otherwise relies on detectives from outside forces.

Opposition from Scotland Yard and the City of London fraud squads, who carry out most SFO investigations, plus a lack of enthusiasm from provincial police forces seem to doom SFO proposals that it should form the nucleus of such a squad.

A home office committee has been considering the issue since last year but has made little progress despite several meetings. The other options under consideration are attaching a fraud unit to the national crime squad or creating a separate national fraud squad.

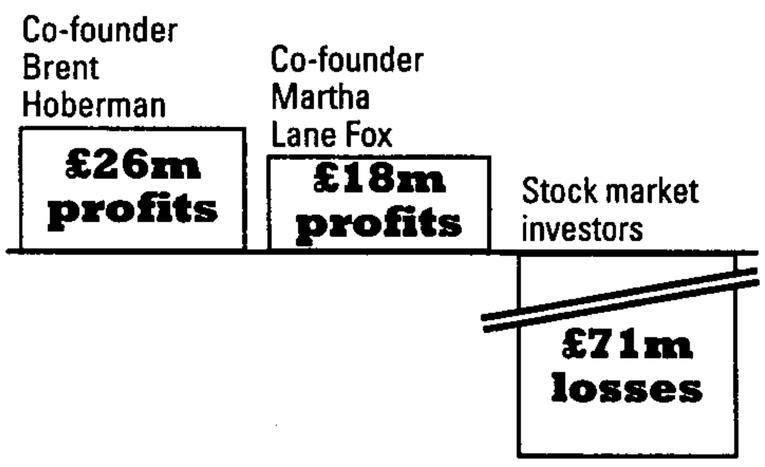
But the provincial forces are opposed to any fraud initiative which does not involve new money. Most would be only too happy to hive off fraud to a national unit but not if their budgets were cut as a result.

While director Rosalind Wright may lose the battle for an SFO fraud squad, she has been busy removing some of the less than impressive senior staff whose past performance is one good reason neither the Yard or the City Police is eager to put itself under SFO command.

Two senior SFO officials were encouraged to take outside jobs despite being involved in major current cases. Another two, associated with past failures, were discouraged from returning to the SFO after secondment. But it is not all gains. Dissatisfaction or better job prospects have resulted in three case controllers leaving in recent months.

Stock Horror — Winners and Losers

lastminute.com



BRITISH judges rarely take a severe line when sentencing fraudsters. Although most charges contain a seven-year maximum, only in rare cases is that figure exceeded despite conviction on multiple counts. All too often the usual drivel about first offence, blameless previous character, lost reputation and family trauma is wheeled out to justify why men in suits can do the crime but must not do the time.

Depressingly often, therefore, the sentence is four years or less which means two years inside. Few conmen have been jailed for 10 years or more. Peter Clowes and Abbas Gokal are among the few deserving exceptions. Gokal received a record 15 years for his role in the BCCI scam.

Across the Atlantic fraud is seen as a very serious crime. Just how serious was revealed in April when a federal judge in New York jailed Patrick Bennett for a US record term of 30 years. Bennett ran what has been described as the biggest ever Ponzi scheme or circular money fraud. Some 12,000 investors were cheated out of $700m on supposed "lease-backed" securities sold by Bennett Funding. The backing was contracts on office equipment many of which did not exist. Bennett was given a choice. Turn over assets, such as a horse farm in his wife's name and receive a 10 year discount or go to jail for 30 years. In similar circumstances Gokal faces an extra three years if he does not make any restitution.

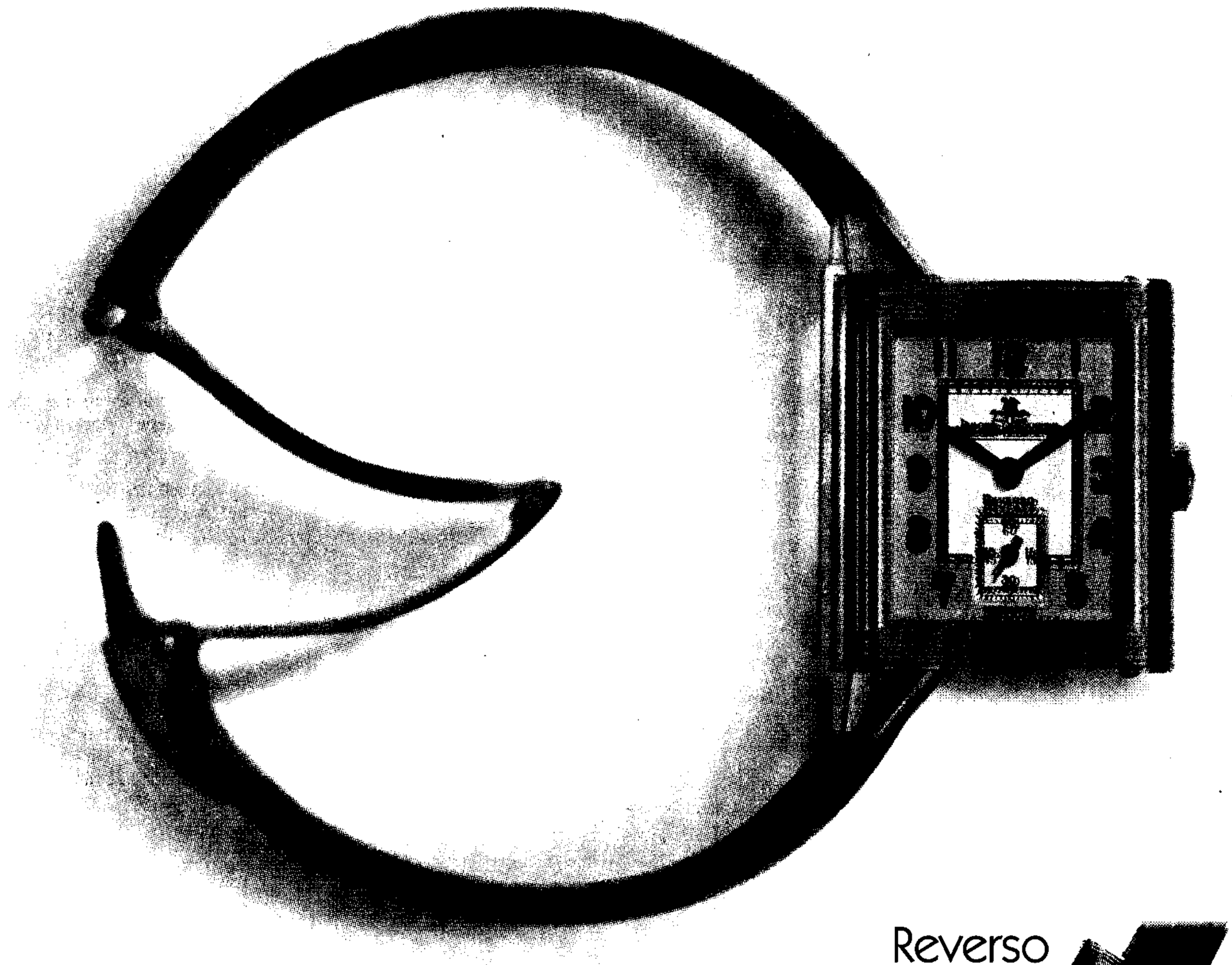
And unlike Gokal, who will serve only half of his 15 years and should be eligible for release or the extra three years in 2001, Bennett will serve most of the 30 years unless the sentence is cut on appeal. Under federal guidelines what you get is largely what you serve.

A shocked Bennett denounced the sentence as "unAmerican". But in fact it is very American. Unlike in Britain, white collar crime is seen as serious business requiring deterrent sentencing.

'Slicker'

THE DIRECTORS — DREDGE/RIGG

WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION
IN MY COUNTRY THE POOR ARE GETTING POORER!
DOWN WITH WTO
WE'RE EQUAL THEN!
EQUAL? HOW?
... BECAUSE IT'S EXACTLY THE SAME IN MY COUNTRY!
DOWN WITH WTO
No WTO



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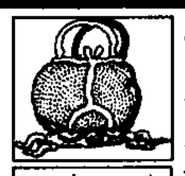
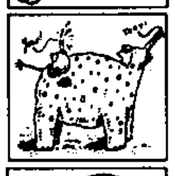


A selection of cartoons, illustrations and animated cels can be found on the Cartoon Gallery Website, from Chris Riddell to Steve Bell, Alex to Appleby, Honeysett to Husband and McLachlan to Matt.



The site also has extensive biographies, including Ronald Searle and Kipper Williams and the merchandise pages offer a selection of books by top cartoonists from Britain and abroad.

All cartoons and books are dispatched within three working days via our mail order department, so for the speculative and gift buyer alike, please visit:

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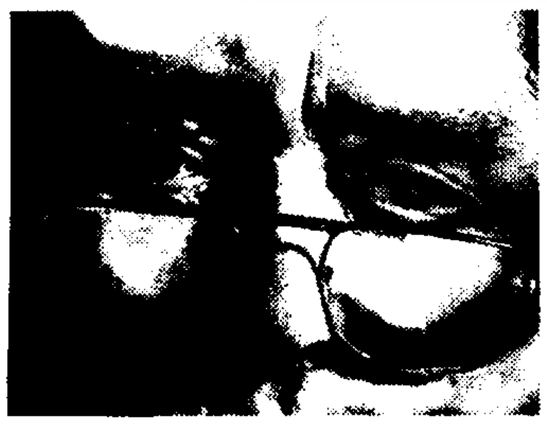

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DESPERATE DAMSEL in distress. Lloyds 30-94-41, 7114107. Sincere heartfelt thanks.

COURSE FEES disaster. £1800 to finish. Please help. Halifax 11-09-09, 00407754.

YOUNG FAMILY, potentially happy/creative, crippled by couple counselling/childcare charges. Help! Yorkshire 05-05-58, 45471027. THANKS!

WOMAN, DESPERATE to flee small town – obsessive Ex destroying life. Please help. Box 1304.

A LOAN NOT GIFTS urgently needed. 500 x £200 or 200 x £500. All will be repaid. Box 0104. Sort/code 30-97-73, A/C 1868767.

HARD WORKING but desperate young man – 16K owed; recently burgled; kid on the way. Would love and greatly appreciate assistance to do Microsoft engineering and pay my way. Lloyds/TSB 1320946 / 30-95-42.

HELP NEEDED. Mature student, (37), studying to be a naturopath. Dealing with congenital heart condition. Recovering from a stroke. Needs funds to keep wolf from door. Any help gratefully received. H.S.B.C. 40-24-25, A/C 21094920.

DISTRAUGHT over nuisance neighbours. Trapped in social housing. Struggling disabled woman needs a new home. Any help greatly appreciated. Lloyds/TSB 77-49-01, 01247563. Box 0203.

TALENTED CHILD needs fairy godmother/godfather to finance Steiner education. Box 1104.

UNLEASH CREATIVITY! Help project to publish new writing, art and photography. Need £1,000. Many thanks. Box 2704.

MATURE undergraduate crippled by debts. Any help eternally appreciated. Barclays 20-25-85, 30261718.

YOUNG DIRK BOGARDE style intuitive actor with September scholarship place at NCDT Drama School needs £5000 for first year living costs. Hardworking (3 jobs) but unable to work once course begins. Lovers of dramatic arts, please help! Box 1804.

FAITH HEALER requires financial help. Affordable donations please. Barclays 20-43-47, 20773131.

STRUGGLING WRITER needs support until published. Many thanks. Royal Bank of Scotland. 16-32-41, 10034970.

£200 NEEDED PLEASE – to help person go forward in life. Box 2104.

DESPERATE for fertility treatment. Cash needed. Please help. Lloyds 30-95-11, A/c-0954110.

DISTRESSED, gentlewoman needs £5000+ to keep roof over her head. Many thanks. 20-41-41, A/C 10135828.

EXTRA FUNDS NEEDED to buy first home. Please help. Sainsbury's 12-60-05, 0753571.

URBAN PLANNING student needs £549.50 to pay debts after rash weekend in London visiting Dome. Appeal to Millennium Commission unlikely to succeed. Thanks. 01-01-55. 01011537.

MY BODY NEEDS cosmetic surgery. Unable to raise £3000 but can repay. Please help. Box 3504.

SMALL PUBLISHING company needs £5000 to stop it from going bust. Will supply accounts. Please help. Box 3404.

COPPED ROUGH END of separation. Forced out of family home. Broke. Need to establish good base for kids to visit. £2000+ would allow new life to be built. HSBC 40-14-14, 91569996.

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EYE LOVE

CHARMING, GOOD-LOOKING male, 55, divorced, tall, slim and fit professional – seeks beautiful tactile, kind, slim lady for long term fun and good times. Surrey & South East. Photo please. Box 3004.

TALL, PROFESSIONAL male, 38, seeks funny, intelligent, pretty girl for travel, romance and laughter. Bristol/Southwest. Box 2204.

PROF MAN, 5ft9, single, non-smoker – seeks lovely, intelligent, slim lady, 30-40 for friendship, laughter and romance. Photo appreciated. Box 2604.

SPARKY GLOS WOMAN, remembers Johnny Ray but isn't crying, seeks man who read broadsheets and prefers the examined life. Photo please. Box 2304.

MAN, 50, kind, considerate, 5'7" but generous. Flat in Dockland, seeks woman any age, blind or disabled ok. Phone No. 020 7702 4172.

TALL, DARK MALE, (36), seeks bright warm soulmale (F) to complete the escape West and share life, laughter, good food & wine. Box 3604.

ATTACHED SHEIKHA 35, brown eyes, seeks tall Arab sheikh who can love and be loved. Letter/photo to Box 2004.

NELL GWYNNE lookalike seeks fruity male for getting pithed. Seedy types especially welcome. ALA. Box 1604.

YOU'RE FEMALE, 45/50ish, confident, imaginative, with a love of old masters; needing the restraining influence of a quietly assertive, truly gentle man. E-mail: macrame.at@virgin.net – Box 1404.

ATTRACTIVE, intelligent professional female, 48, looking for ditto male soulmale with a wry sense of humour and a caring attitude to people and life. Kent, Sussex, Surrey, London preferred. Box 3704.

WIDOWER (52) with personality and GSOH one year on and getting his life back together – WLTM slim lady for theatre, dining, companionship and whatever that might lead to. Photo appreciated. Box 1004.

UNCONVENTIONAL acquarian guy, 40, likes dining, massage, good living and sunsets – seeks beautiful thinking girl to share life's journey into happiness. Photo please. Box 1503.

ATTRACTIVE, HAPPY sorted woman, 40, loves travel, currently stuck in Oxford, seeks interesting single man with GSOH for distraction. Box 0604.

GRADUATE, PROFESSIONAL male, 35, humorous, warm and lively with the rapier wit of Oscar Wilde, the wisdom of Socrates and the charm of James Bond – seeks attractive, intelligent, young female who enjoys conversation and laughter. Box 0704.

32 YEARS IN WAITING: slim, handsome young male, (32) elegant appearance, public school educated, professional career, seeks: a wealthy and mature lady for long-term relationship. I have no commitments and for the right person I will be faithful to the end! All letters responded to with photo. Box 0804.

SLAPHEAD MUSO, young 53, ns/gsoh, WLTM cheerful, goodhearted girl (45-53) for good times and gratification (mutual). Brighton. Box 0404.

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE sought by 38 yr old attached male – for romantic trysts. Box 0304.

ROMANTIC, SMART attractive brilliant Indian lady doctor, recently widowed – seeks caring, well-travelled public school educated English gentleman in his fifties with sense of humour, in London area. Please enclose picture. Box 3204.

WARM, SENSITIVE, articulate male – active, young sixties, open marriage, GSOH – enjoys arts, talking, talking, good food/wine – seeks sensual woman friend/lover for worthwhile relationship. South London. Box 3104.

UNCONVENTIONAL acquarian guy, 40, likes dining, massage, good living and sunsets – seeks beautiful thinking girl to share life's journey into happiness. Photo please. Box 1503.

ATTRACTIVE, HAPPY sorted woman, 40, loves travel, currently stuck in Oxford, seeks interesting single man with GSOH for distraction. Box 0604.

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The New CD-ROM business directory which is so powerful the powerful already want it banned

Called UK-Info Power, it is another first from the company which put 55 million Britons on a single CD-ROM Disk. And the new disk is causing just as much furore as the first one. To the outrage of the privacy lobby is now added the cries of protest from the business institutions. In the latest instance, I-CD Publishing has yet again, it seems, done the unthinkable: *it has made public the names and addresses of company directors.* Only the Archbishop of Canterbury has yet to condemn it from the pulpit.

So, as you might expect, UK-Info Power is already selling like hot cakes.

The charges against it are so predictable that I-CD could have written the script for all those who headed hot-foot to denounce it on radio, or who fumed about it to the press.

Dangerous. A licence for anarchists. An incitement to assault, rape, kidnapping, harrassment, siege, and an insidious threat to the continued existence of the British Empire *(shurely shome mistake? – Ed.)* Well, perhaps not that, but you get the message. The point is, IT SHOULD BE BANNED.

OK, so it gives the names and home addresses of 3.8 million company directors. And because it has a state-of-the-art map you can actually pinpoint where they live, and the best way to get there. And true, if their company just fobs off complaints, and indulges in very dodgy dealing, they just might now get a telephone call at home, or find some enraged customer banging on their front door.

But oddly that isn't why people are buying it. They want it because it provides desktop information on the whole British business community – turnover, profits, business addresses, directors, employees and associations between one company and another (which may otherwise not be clearly identifiable).

So – surprise – it is companies which are buying it. In any case, at £229.95 it is not exactly an impulse purchase for someone with a £50 grudge.

For companies – and there are 2.7 million on the disk – UK-Info Power does what on-line fails to do. It cuts out costly, time-consuming and frequently fruitless searches on the Internet. It also removes the drudge of sending someone down to Companies House to look it all up and waste half-a-day doing so.

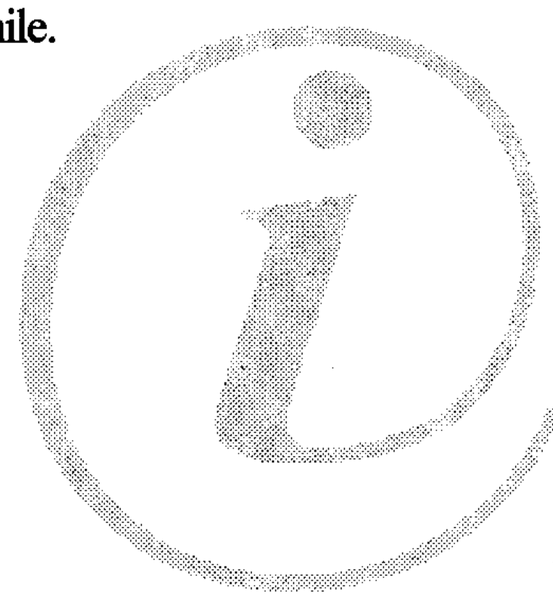
Moreover, it helps root out the shady, the cowboys, the fly-by-nights, and the people they would never want to do business with. For the rip-off merchant, in short, there is now no hiding place.

Otherwise it's good news. UK-Info Power (whisper it) is *business friendly*.

And after all, if that wasn't so what would be the point of it? Nobody would buy it – except, of course, a handful of nutters. And there are just not enough of them to make it worthwhile.

They may be mad.

We aren't.



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